

A
TOUCHSTONE
OF GRACE.

Discovering the differences
betweene true and
counterfeit Grace:

Laying downe infallible E-
vidences and markes of
true Grace:

Seruing for the triall of a mans
spirituall estate.

By A. HARSNET,
Bachelor in Divinitie, and Minister of
Gods Word at *Chranham in Essex.*

The second Edition, corrected
and enlarged.

2 Pet. 1. 10.

*Wherefore, the rather, brethren, giue di-
ligence to make your calling and el-
ction sure: for if ye doe these things,
ye shall neuer fall.*

L O N D O N,
Printed by R. B. for P. Stephens and
C. Meredith, dwelling at the Gol-
den Lyon in *paules Church-
yard.* 1632.





TO
The VVorshipful
GEORGE PITT, of
Harrow on the Hill,
ESQUIRE,
And

To M^{rs}. MARY PITT
his wel-affected Wife;
Grace be multiplied.

Right Worthie, and
my much respected
friends: when these
my poore labours went
first abroad, you were then
but partners, and sharers
in them; they being dedi-
A 3 cated

THE EPISTLE

cated vnto the people of
my cure and charge, of
which you were the chiefe.
But seeing that time hath
so quickly brought forth a-
nother impression, I am
bold to intitle you wholly
vnto it which thing I hope
I may doe; with out any
colour of inconstancy in me
(the worke not being now
altogether the same it
was) or shadow of iniury
vnto my people, they being
willing in this particular
to resigne vp their right
vnto you, as to those from
whom they haue formerly
recei-

DEDICATORY.

receiued so much frindship
and kindnes as they can no
way make you a valuable
requitall. For what office
of loue could there be ey-
ther publike, or priuate
wherin you were wanting
to them? your charity and
bountie hath so abounded
amongst vs, that, as we
had great cause to blesse
God for your presence with
vs, so we haue as much
cause to lament your ab-
sence from vs. Accept
therefore (I desire you) of
these my labours as a pledg
and testimony both of my

THE EPISTLE

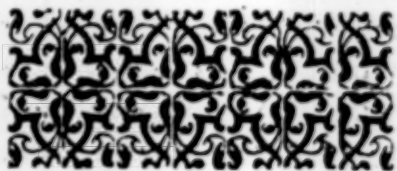
vnfained loue, and res-
 pettue thankfulnessse, for
 that your constant and
 continued kindnesse to me
 and mine, which you haue
 euidenced in many parti-
 culars, euer since your first
 comming amongst vs. For
 which kindnesse of yours, I
 shall euer continue an vn-
 fained, and heartie well-
 wisher of your chiefeſt
 good, even the saluation of
 your soules; whereof I
 must hold my seife bound
 to haue a care, although
 (to my no litle grieſe) the
 Lord bath now remoued
 you,

DEDICATORY.

you from me: Howsoever
we are separated in regard
of cohabitation, yet shall I
dayly be neere you in my
best affections, and hearti-
ly reioyce to heare of your
good proceedings, going on
in that profession which
you made amongst vs, and
building still vpon that
foundation which (I hope)
was layed with vs. For
which grace to be bestowed
vpon you, I shall be...

Cranham, Octob. 3.
MDCXXXI.

Your Remembrancer,
at the Throne of
GRACE,
A. Harsnett.



TO
THE GODLY

and well-affected
READER.

GEntle Reader, I haue
here presented vn-
to thy view, the
summe and substance of di-
uers Sermons, which I prea-
ched vnto mine owne
Charge, and some adioy-
ning neighbours : who re-
ceiuing (as they professed)
much good by my La-
bours, were earnest with me
either to bestow vpon them
some

To the godly Reader.

some of my notes, or else to publish in Print, that which I had deliuered in word. Whose requests I could not well with-stand, being vrged by some, that my calling makes mee a common seruant for any good I may in publike, as well as in priuate. And I was rather induced vnto this taske in a double respect : First, because amongst the heap of bookes that are printed, two few strike downe-right at sinne, or lend a hand to helpe forward the worke of Grace. Secondly, because the iniquity of the time is such, that with too many (who follow the fashions of the World)

grace

To the godly Reader.

grace is out of fashion, and of all other things the least regarded, or looked after; although (as I shall make it plaine) it bee the onely thing to bee desired, as that which sanctifies and well-seasons every condition heere, and makes way for happinesse hereafter: for the want of Grace cuts off all hope of future glory, and precipitates people into endlesse woe and misery. Nature by its strength may in time worke out, or weare out many bodily maladies, without the aduice of the Physician, or any helpe of physicke: but the soule, so deadly sinne-sicke as it is, can neuer bee helped and healed, without

To the godly Reader.

without the Bilsam of grace; which alone is able in time to worke out those malignant humors, which the soule hath contracted vnto it selfe. A rare thing it is to finde that man or woman which will not easily be perswaded, for the preuenting or curing some deadly disease, to take (though otherwise loathing physike) such things as shall be prescribed them for their good: for Nature seekes to preserue it selfe. Hence it is that the Toad (vpon distemper) runs to the Plantain, the Hart to the Dittany, and the Dog to the grasse. Therefore, vnlesse we will shew our selues to haue lesse vnderstanding than the vnreasonable

To the godly Reader.

reasonable creatures ; wee must looke out for Grace, the only cure of our distempered and diseased soules.

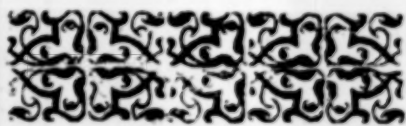
Reade then, I beseech thee, this small Treatise with the same affection, and heart, in which it was compiled for thee ; and that is (God knowes) an earnest desire of bettering thy spirituall estate, and helping forward thy saluation : that the worldly wise-man may grow more wise for his soule ; that the vngodly may labour for grace ; that the hypocrite may bee more sincere and vpright ; and that the gracious heart may grow in grace, and with more comfort hold it out vnto the end. If vpon
the

To the godly Reader.

the first taste thou findest
but little or no sweetnesse
heerein, let mee intreat
thee to assay the second
time; one bit may draw
downe another. It is a rare
feast where euery guest likes,
and loues all the prouision
that is made; yet he is an
vnworthy guest which will
feed of no dish, or bee of-
fended with his friend
which inuited him, because
some one or two dishes bee
prepared which hee likes
not. Reade, taste, and
Consider. If thou receiue
any good by these my La-
bours, giue God the praise,
and pray for me

*Thy seruant in the
Lords workes*

A H.



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Gentle

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before thou readeſt.

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A
TOVCHSTONE
of Grace.

HEBR. 13. 25.

Grace be with you all.

IT is not my purpose to spend many words about the Author, or authority of this Epistle, which are questioned by some, and controuerted by others, lest I should seeme to trifle out the time with matter of no great importance.

B

Al.

Although the Author cannot speake for himselfe to claime his right, or to vindicate that wrong which hee hath sustained; yet the matter of the Epistle speakes sufficiently for its Author and authority. Why should any question the Auth or, when it beares Saint *Pauls* Ensigne, and marke, though not his name? Great wisedome there was in concealing of his name; the want whereof is no sound argument to proue it was not *Pauls*, for then (by the same reason) we may say, that it had no Author, because it hath no Owner, no name put vnto it. And as for its authoritie, me thinkes it should be
out

out of question, the matter thereof being so heavenly, so liuely setting out the offices of Christ, so soundly prouing him to be the promised *Messias*, the only Prophet, and Archbishop of his Church.

The words which I have read vnto you, are the ordinary salutation, and farewell which Saint *Paul* vseth in all other his Generall Epistles, the sense and meaning whereof I will giue you in a few words.

Grace in Scripture hath well-nigh twentie seuerall acceptations : I will acquaint you with some of the principall.

Sometimes it is taken

B 2

for

Grace how
taken in
Scripture

for the free, and vnder-
 ued loue, and fauor of God
 electing, and calling of vs,
*2 Tim. 1.9. Hee hath saued
 vs, and called vs with an ho-
 ly calling, not according to
 our workes, but according to
 his purpose and grace.*

Sometimes it is taken for
 the imputation of Christ
 his righteousness, *Rom. 5.
 17. Much more shall they
 which receiue the abundance
 of grace, and of the gift of
 righteousness, &c.* Heere
 grace standeth in oppositi-
 on vnto the guilt of *Adams*
 sinne, and so is taken for
Iustification.

Sometimes grace is taken
 for the guidance, directi-
 on, and operation of Gods
 Spirit in vs, as *Rom. 6. 14.*

Sinne

Sinne shall not have dominion over you, for yee are not under the Law, but under Grace, where it may be taken for Sanctification.

Sometimes Grace is taken for the blessed estate of Gods children after they be iustified, and sanctified, *Rom. 5. 2. By whom we haue accesse through Faith vnto this grace wherein we stand.*

Sometimes grace is taken for the practice of piety, *2 Pet. 3. 18. Grow in Grace.*

And sometimes it is taken for glory, the perfection of grace *1 Pet. 1. 13. Hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought vnto you at the reuelation of Iesus Christ.*

Here grace cannot well be vnderstood of any thing else but glory. And glory may very well be termed grace in two respects :

- 1 First, because it comes through grace, *Ephes. 2. 8.*
- 2 And secondly, because by grace we come to have some assurance of glory, *2 Thess. 2. 16. Who hath given vs everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace.*

But grace in this place is taken for the free loue and fauour of God to man-wards, together with all those benefits spirituall & eternall, which doe flow from thence ; as *Adoption, Regeneration, Remission of sinnes,*

sinnes, Iustification and Sanctification; all which doe properly come under this terme Grace.

From whence we may lay this foundation, vpon which we intend (God assisting) to build our ensuing discourse, to wit, that (seeing *Paul* wisht grace vnto the *Hebrewes*, and all others vnto whom hee wrote, aboue, and before all other things) *The chiefest good which we can wish one to another, or can receiue and be made partakers of, is Grace.* No doubt, if any thing could haue beene more beneficiall, or necessary vnto the *Hebrewes*, hee would haue wished it vnto them: but seeing he begins

Doctr.

Grace is the chiefest good.

and ends this, and other his Epistles with this prayer, *Grace be with you*: we may safely conclude, that *Paul* esteemed Grace to be the best good which he could wish them, or they partake of.

Long and large disputes haue beene amongst Naturalists concerning the chiefe good; seuerall verdicts, and iudgements haue beene giuen of it; some calling pleasures, some esteeming profits, and some accounting honours the chiefe good; some this thing, and other. some that, as their seuerall humors and affections haue swayd them: but we haue not so learned Christ, and therefore (from a better prin-

principall) beyond the reach or pitch of all Naturalists, we conclude, that the prime good, the best thing we can partake of, is Grace: for I may truly say of it, as *David* speaks of *Goliaths* sword, *1 Sam.* 21. 9. *None to that.* All earthly comforts, yea the greatest preferments, the largest possessions, the most excellent endowments either of bodie or minde, in respect of Grace, are but as dung and drosse. The excellencie of Grace will appeare the better, if we acquaint our selues with the truth and worth thereof: which that we may the better doe obserue wee these particulars:

B 5 ; First,

1

First of all, I will lay downe the differences betwixt true and counterfeit Grace.

2

Secondly, I will giue you some euidences and markes of true Grace.

3

Thirdly, I will shew the reasons of the doctrine.

4

And then in the fourth and last place, I will come to make some profitable vse and application of the point.

Differences betwixt true and counterfeit Grace.

First, of the differences betwixt true and false, sound & counterfeit grace. A necessary search, and a point

point wherein we haue all need to be skilfull, because of the deepe imposture, and deceitfulnesse of our owne wicked wretched hearts, which (like vnto lying spirits) will flatter, and deceiue vs, telling vs that we are in a good way, and that all is well with vs, when as it is worse than nought; and therefore we should be the more willing to heare of it. For a man may haue a gracelesse & wicked hart, and yet not know it, nor belecue it; and we are beguiled in nothing so much, in nothing so soone, as about our spirituall estate, the estate of grace; pleasing our selues with shewes and shadowes, in stead of mat-
ter

ter and substance. Besides, the Deuill is subtile, and he will not bee wanting to teach vs the art of hypocrisie: and hence it is that vertues are oft taken vp by vicious persons; and fiends of darkenesse will for their owne ends sometimes appeare like Angels of light. How much then doth it stand vs vpon, how neerely doth it concerne vs, to search and trie whether our coine be currant, or counterfeit: lest that, as for the present we beguile others, in the end wee deceiue our owne soules.

The differences twixt true and counterfeit grace, lye especially in foure things:

First,

and counterfeit Grace.

13

First, the ground or beginning of Grace.

1

Secondly, the growth, or proceeding of it.

2

Thirdly, the declension or falling thereof.

3

Fourthly, and lastly, the rising and perseverance thereof.

4

First, of the ground and beginning of grace. Know we that all grace commeth from God the fountaine of grace: *Euery good giuing, and euery perfect gift is from aboue, and commeth downe from the Father of lights.*

Iam. 1. 17.

Grace commeth from grace: for there is grace infusing, and grace infused. Now that you may the better distinguish the one from the other: before I fall

Grace de-
fined.

fall vpon the differences,
giue me leaue to acquaint
you with the nature of that
grace, from whence all
grace is deriued vnto vs.
Peter Martyr doth thus de-
fine the grace of God:
*Grace is the free good will of
God to man, whereby he ac-
cepteth of vs in Christ, for-
giues vs our sinnes, giues vs
his Spirit here, and eternall
life hereafter.*

The defi-
nition ex-
plained.

First, it is called the free
good will of God, vtterly
to exclude all merit on our
part. Hence it is that the
Scripture in diuers places
doth diametrally oppose
grace and merit: as *Rom.
11.6. If it be of grace, it is
no more of works, or else were
grace no more grace. For
grace*

grace is all grace, or no grace. So *Ephes. 2. 8, 9.* By grace yee are saued, it is the gift of God, not of works, &c.

Light is not more contrary vnto darknesse, good stands not in more opposition vnto euill, than grace and merit do oppose each other. Merit in the best sense, in the least sense, doth marre the sense of grace. Yea, grace excludes that preuision of our workes, which some imagine to be the ground of Gods louing vs; or if not the ground a maine motive, and great meanes of Gods bestowing his grace vpon vs. But the nature of grace will not admit of any such preuision, and foreseeing

Ezek. 16. 6

seeing of our workes. The ground of all grace is in God himselfe; and therefore grace must needs bee free, it being his meere good will; and owne goodnesse to respect vs. As he told the people of Israel, *Deut. 7. 8.* Nothing without God moueth him, or can any wayes allure him to bestow his grace vpon vs. Hee found vs in our bloud, vnlovely, lothsome, vnworthy to be beloued: wherefore wee conclude, that grace is Gods free good will.

The Church of *Rome* hath beene much puzzled about this doctrine of Gods free grace, and therefore in generall tearmes they will seeme

seeme to ioyne issue with vs, as if they said not, as if they held not any other thing than that the Apostle alleageth, *Rom. 3. 24.*

That we are iustified freely by his grace; but like the Diuell their father, they speake the truth in a false manner; their words haue a wicked meaning, which ouerthrowes the nature of Grace, and the very foundation of Christian religion: For by *Iustification* they do not vnderstand the free grace of God in himselfe, and that righteousnesse of Christ, freely imputed vnto vs, but such a righteousnesse, as God freely works in vs: So by grace, they do not vnderstand the free
and

Rom 3 24

χα:ίς.
μω:α.

and vnderferued loue & fauour of God to man, but certaine gifts of grace, certaine, habituall graces, as faith, loue, mercy, &c. which God freely workes in vs, and for which (say they) he doth accept of vs. Now what is this, but to ouerturne grace, to overthrow Iustification, and to make vs our owne Sauours? When for certaine graces of our own, and our owne inherent righteoufnesse, God doth accept of vs. From whence we may boldly conclude: that the doctrine of the Church of *Rome* doth overthrow the foundation, it peruersts the nature of grace, and takes away the truth of Iustification.

cation. For Iustification rightly considered, implies two things: First, an utter emptinesse and want in vs: Secondly, an absolute fulnesse and sufficiencie in Christ. I would know how this can be, if any merit or worth be in vs; if we merit, there is something in vs; if something in vs, then not an utter emptines; neither is there an all-sufficiencie in Christ: thus they take away Iustification, they make Christ no absolute Sauiour, and so no perfect Christ, and so no Christ at all. Let vs therefore abominate the doctrine of the Church of *Rome*, that satanicall Synagogue; let vs hold it to be

bee Antichristian, against Christ, and their doctrine to be against the truth of grace, and (to say truth) a gracelesse doctrine. To put it out of all question that grace is the free gift of God, Saint *Paul* telleth vs, 2 *Tim.* 1.9. that it was giuen vnto vs before the world was. True, say the Papists: but how? thorow Gods foreseeing our workes. But this the Apostle confutes in the same verse, telling vs, *that it is not according to our workes, but according to his own purpose and grace.* Againe, in *Eph.* 1.5, 6. He telleth vs, that *He predestinated vs to be adopted, through IESVS CHRIST vnto himselfe,*

Eph. 1.5, 6.

selfe, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the prayse of the glorie of his grace. Therefore, to conclude this point: know, that whatsoever good thing hath befallen vs; or is comming towards vs, (all fauours and mercies exhibited, or promised) all are of Gods free grace, all according to the good pleasure of his will; the ground of all is within himselfe, as *Beza* well rendereth the words, *Ephes. 1.5.* ἐκ αὐτοῦ. Teaching vs that no cause present, or future, without God, moued God to bestowe his grace vpon vs. For if God had not loued vs before wee loued him, wee had neuer

1 Ioh 4.19

neuer beene beloued, 1 Ioh.

4. 19. If God had not loued vs before we had been amiable, fit to be beloued, we had neuer tasted of his loue: for he found vs filthy in our bloud, *Eze. 16.*

Ez. 16.6.

6. If God had not loued vs before we had beene able to procure, or deserue his loue, we had neuer beene beloued, *Rom. 5. 7, 8.*

Ro. 5 7, 8

If we be at any time able to doe God any seruice, it is not we, but the grace of God in vs, 1 Cor. 15. 10.

1 Cor 15
10.Or, if at any time, wee bring any thing vnto God, we must say as *Dauid* said, 1 *Chron. 29. 14. All things, O Lord, come of thee, and of thine owne hands haue wee giuen thee.* If God respect,

or

or reward any seruice of ours, what doth hee but crowne his owne gifts?

The consideration whereof cries shame in our faces, for making the Lord so wretched a requitall for so free and vnderferued grace. Our case was desperate, our condition damnable; nothing of our owne to bring vs into grace, and fauour with G^d: only his owne goodnesse moved him to take pittie vpon vs, and freely of his *grace to iustifie vs,* Rom. 3. 24. How should this knit our hearts vnto the Lord? A benefit, the more freely it comes, the stronger it tyes the receiuer vnto the giuer. The
Sun

Rom. 3. 24

Pſ. 104.19

Sun ſhines not more freely vpon vs (nay not ſo freely, for that can doe no other, it ſhines by vertue of an higher and commanding power, and that order which God hath ſet, *Pſal.* 104.19.) then Gods grace is beſtowed vpon vs. How ſhould this fill our hearts and tongues with the praiſes of the Lord? Had we the tongues of men and Angels, we could not ſufficiently expreſſe his praiſes, for the freeneſſe of his grace. How ſhould this tye vs vnto the Lord, and knit our hearts vnto him, who hath ſo abounded in loue vnto vs, and that ſo freely, ſo vnderſtandably?

Again, here is matter
of

of comfort vnto all de-
cted and drooping spirits,
cast downe in the sight and
sense of their owne vile-
nesse and vnworthinesse;
these should consider that
Gods grace is free; hee
lookes not at any thing in
vs in the bestowing of his
grace. What, doest thou
thinke thou art vncapable
of grace, because thou art
vnworthy of it? This is a
meere fallacie. Doe not
cast away thy confidence,
because thou seest not in
thee that goodnesse thou
desirest. It is goodnesse
enough for thee, to bee
had enough in thine owne
esteem. Be but vile enough,
base enough, bad enough,
and then thou art good
C enough

Luk. 1. 53.

Esay 55. 1.

enough to partake of grace. Thine emptinesse wil make some way to fulnesse, *Luke 1. 53. He fills the hungry with good things. Ho, euery one that thirsteth, come yee to the waters, and yet that haue no siluer, come buy wine and milke without mony; yea, or monyes worth; all conditions of our own worth and merit are here vtterly excluded. Therefore comfort thy selfe, and cheare vp thy heart, thou poore vnworthy sinner, in this, that God is most free of his loue; though thou hast nothing whereby to deserue any grace from God, yet he hath enough in himselfe to moue him to giue to all poore reiected and humble sinners.* The

The deuil(it may be) will teach thee to put a price vpon Gods wares; he will make thee beleue that thou must haue thus much holinessse, or thus much obedience, or thus much faith to purchase or procure the loue of God, as if we had grace from God by way of exchange, we being thus and thus qualified: but I tell thee that thou must come to God with a bare naked hand, with a poore emptie soule, else thou art vncapable of his grace. Methinkes this should vphold poore soules that faint, and are ready to sinke vnder the weight and burthen of their sinnes, mourning like *Rahel*, and will not be com-

C 2 forced,

Ion 2.8.

forted, casting away their hope and confidence, yea, and forsaking their owne *mercy by wasting vpon lying vanities, Ion.2.8.* Whereby they doe not only rob God of the glory of his grace, but euen defraud their owne soules of comfort, through slavish feare and vnbeleefe. Hath not the Lord made a generall inuitation, calling to the throne of grace all hungry, thirsting, and mourning soules, that so they might partake of his wine and milke? Yea, that they may receiue mercy, and finde grace to helpe in time of neede, *Heb.4.16.* If God hath giuen thee but a heart to desire grace, thou hast a warrant

Heb.4.16

warrant to belecue that God will freely bestow it vpon thee. For *he will fulfill the desire of them that feare him; He also will heare their cry, and will saue them,* Psal. 145. 19. I tarry the longer vpon this point, for the comfort of those poore ignorant, fearefull and vnbeleueing soules, whose consciences speaking bitter things against them, passe the sentence of death vpon themselves, as vn capable of any grace, because they are guilty of these and these sinnes. If they were thus & thus qualified (they say) they should haue some hope that God would be good vnto them; but know thou, poore deluded soule,

C 3

that

Psal. 145
19.

Ephes. 1. 4.

that no mans goodnesse is the ground of Gods loue vnto him: no, no, it is Gods loue is the cause of our goodnesse: *Ephes. 1. 4. He hath chosen vs that we should be holy.* Holinesse is not the cause, but the effect of Gods louing vs. Thou must be in Christ, before euer thou canst bee good, or haue any inclination vnto goodnesse: for as the branch cannot beare fruit of it selfe, vnlesse it abide in the Vine, *Iohn 15. 4.* no more can we, vnlesse we be in Christ.

Ioh. 15. 4.

Hee accepteth of vs in Christ.

It followes: *Whereby he accepteth of vs in Christ.* This truth is euident by diuers places of Scripture, *Ioh. 1. 17. The Law was gi-
uen*

uen by Moses, but grace and truth came by Iesus Christ. So Ephes. 1. 5, 6. Hee hath predestinated vs to bee adopted through him; and in the next verse, He made vs accepted in his beloved: Which places, and diuers other doe plainly teach vs, that all grace bestowed vpon vs, is by the meanes of Iesus Christ, and therefore is well called the grace of our Lord Iesus Christ, because without Christ no grace can come to sinfull men. He is the conduit-pipe in and thorow whom all grace runs from the Father vnto vs, hee is the head which conueyes all spirituall life, sense, and motion into all his members,

C 4

Col. 4. 19.

Ioh. 1. 16.

bers, which was typified
by that Oyntment which
ran downe from *Aarons*
head to his beard, and so
to the skirts of his gar-
ment. *In him it pleased the*
Father that all fulnesse should
dwell, Coloss. 1. 19. And of
his fulnesse we receiue grace
for grace, Ioh. 1. 16.

So that from hence wee
may learne, vnto whom
we are to returne the prai-
ses of any good thing wee
partake of, whether alrea-
die exhibited, or promised:
God in Christ is to be glo-
rified for all. Therefore
such as sacrifice to their
owne nets, do sacrilegious-
ly rob God and Christ of
their due. We are not able
to thinke a good thought,
much

much lesse to speake a gracious word, most of all vnable vnto any pious and holy work without Christ: for without him *wee can do nothing, Ioh. 15.5.* It is God which worketh in vs both the will and the deed, Phil 1.13. Not I, sayes Paul, 1 Cor. 15. 10. But the grace of God in me. If God bestowes vpon thee any good which hee hath denied vnto others; it is not because hee saw thee better, or more worthy than another, but because hee is pleased to bee more gracious and mercifull vnto thee, in Christ, than to another.

Ioh. 15.5.

1 Cor. 15.
10.

Againe, here we learne whether to goe for such grace as is wanting in vs:

C 5 seek

seeke it from God through Christ. What, doest thou hope to finde it through thy seruice, thy prayers, thy good meaning, or good workes? Away with these menstruous rags; goe to God through Christ: *No man commeth to the Father but by him, Iob. 14. 6.* All other hopes and helps without Christ, are but as Ægyptian staues, vnto which if a man leane, they will strike into his hand and pierce it. Make sure of Christ by beleeuing, and then sure of grace: Want of true vnion and communion with Christ, makes seeming grace in many temporizers to welter and come to nothing, as standing

ding pits and shallow
bookes drie vp in Summer
for want of some fountaine
and spring to fill or feed
them.

It followeth: *Forgiues
vs our sinnes.* This also is
euidēt, *Ephes. 1.7.* By
whom wee haue redemption
through his blood, euen the
forgiuenesse of sins according
to his rich grace. Hence it is
that the Lord proclaimes
himselſe, *Exod. 34.6.* Gra-
cious, mercifull, forgiuing
sinne: as if the fruit, yea, the
excellencie of his grace lay
in the forgiuenesse of our
sinnes, grace being illustra-
ted in this act of forgiue-
nesse, as much as in any o-
ther. Benefits bestowed
vpon vs, though they pro-
ceed

Forgiues
vs our
sinnes.
Ephes. 1.7.

Exod. 34.6

ceed meerely from loue, doe not so much magnifie the clemencie of the giuer; as the setting downe by great wrongs and intolerable iniuries, or requiring of euill with good. Many a man will easily giue, that cannot so easily forgiue. Herein appears the excellency of Gods grace, in passing by our infinite and lothsome iniquities and transgressions. To say truly, it is onely grace which can forgiue, forgiuenesse being a free and gracious pardoning of some fault committed, and of some punishment deserved.

Besides, the grace of God is the more to bee magni-

magnified in that it extends vnto all finnes, great as well as small, and small as well as great. For if God should forgiue some and not other some, it would be thought that hee is either not so willing, or not so able to remit all sin as some, yes, his grace reacheth to the forgiuenesse of all sin, *Colos. 2. 13.*

And yee which were dead in sins, hath he quickned together with him, forgiuing you all your trespasses. So 1 Ioh.

1. 7. The bloud of Iesus Christ cleanseth vs from all sin: the guilt of one transgression makes vs liable to eternall torments; and our sins haue beene multiplied, they are like to the sand by the

the sea-shore, innumerable, yet grace is able to remit all. Then are the Romanists foully mistaken. First, in saying that some sinnes need no forgiuenesse; and secondly, that some sinnes may bee forgiuen without the free grace of GOD. Some sins (they say) need no forgiuenesse, as Concupiscence which they make to be no sinne; whereas in truth it is the spawne and seed of all sinne, as *Iam. 1.*

14. Euery man is tempted, when he is drawne away by his owne concupiscence, and is inticed. Againe, they say that many veniall sinnes which are not done against, but besides Gods Commandements; and which

Iam. 1. 14.

which are not acted with a peruerſe minde, with a rebellious heart againſt God; theſe ſins, though they diſpleaſe God, yet they make not God diſpleaſed with the doer of them, and therefore may be done away by our ſelues, through the ſaying ouer a few *Aue Maris*, or the doing of ſome work of charitie, or if that will not ſerue the turne, a little Holy-water will waſh away all filth, or if that faile, the breath of a Biſhops bleſſing will blow away their ſinne; or if all theſe faile here, a little Purgatory-fire hereafter with his holineſſe pardon, will make them as cleane as need be. Moſt horrible and blaſ-

Esa 43. 25.

Ezek. 18. 4

Mark. 2. 7.

blasphemous vntruthes against the grace of God, which alone is the prime cause and chiefe meanes of the forgiuenesse of all sin,

Esay 43. 25. I am hee that putteth away thine iniquitie for my owne sake. If thou

hast committed any sin, it must be forgiuen, else thou

shalt perish, for *the soule that sins, it shall die, Ezek. 18. 4.* If sins be forgiuen,

God must doe it: for this is a prerogatiue royall proper to the Lord, *Who can*

forgiue sins but God onely?

Mar. 2. 7. If God forgives any sins, it must be of his

meere grace, *Eph. 1. 7. For his owne sake.*

In the second place let the consideration hereof

pronoke

prouoke vs to vnfeined and hearty thanks, for that when our estate was so desperate, our condition so damnable, as there was no possibilitie of deseruing grace, we were so farre indebted to the law of God, as no way able to make satisfaction, that then the LORD of his rich grace should forgiue all. Suppose thou wert ready to be cast into prison by thy Creditor for a thousand pounds, all thou hast to bee seized vpon and sold, and yet thy Creditour vnsatisfied; at length in meere pittie, hee should set thee free and bestow great things vpon thee: oh, how would thy heart bee knit to such a man!

man! thou wouldest thinke,
that thou shouldest neuer
be able to requite his loue:
God hath done ten thou-
sand times more than so for
thee; how then art thou
bound to loue him, to
praise him, to tell vnto o-
thers, what great things
the Lord hath done
for thee? What, all debts
forgiuen? all reckonings
cleered, and made euen be-
twixt the Lord and thee,
without any satisfaction
made on thy part? What,
no accusation in that blacke
and terrible day lyable a-
gainst thee? All sinnes
done away through his
free grace? O the deepe-
nesse of the riches of his
mercy! How vn-vtterable
is

is his goodnesse? What wilt thou render vnto the Lord for his vnspeakable grace? How should this inflame thy heart with the loue of God, as *Luk. 7. 47*? Such as doe not heartily loue the Lord, may feare they haue no part, no share in his rich grace. Vnthankfulnesse is a grieuous sinne, and that which moues the Lord (I am perswaded) many times to hide away the ioy and comfort of the pardon of their sins from many of his children. How ready are many, if they be but a little crossed in some petty matter, to swell and hang the lip; yea, with a little helpe, could be perswaded to quarrell, and be
angry

angry with the Lord, as *Jonas* was? If we fall short of our hopes in some good thing we haue promised to our selues; or if God cut vs short of some outward comforts lent vnto vs, what grumbling and repining is there against the wisdom and righteousness of our good God? All sense of his infinite loue in forgiuing an infinite debt vnto vs is swallowed vp, wee haue little ioy in it, and God hath as little thanks from vs for it; whereas, better lose all the world, than misse this grace: for, as *Mat. 16. 20.* *What will it profit a man to gaine the whole world, and lose his soule? which doth*
perish

Mat. 16.
20.

perish without it partake of the grace of God.

It followes: *Gives vs his Spirit here.* This necessarily followes, as Sanctification succeeds Iustification, *Ezek. 36. 25. I will powre cleane water upon you, and ye shall bee cleane from all your filthinesse.* Here is our Iustification. Then followes in the next verse: *A new heart will I giue you, and a new spirit wil I put within you.* And againe the 27. verse, *I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walke in my statutes, and yee shall keepe my iudgements, and do them.* Which words imply our Sanctification; Gods Spirit is made manifest in vs, by our walking in Gods
Com-

*Gives vs
his Spirit :*

Ez. 36 25.

• Commandements: which wee can neuer doe to any purpose, vntill by the Spirit corruption be deaded, and grace inuined in vs. Grace in the child of God workes in him more and more sanctificatiō through the Spirit, that is, a cleansing of our selues daily from all filthinesse; and neuer can we haue any euidence of the truth of grace (as shall be made more plaine hereafter) or of our iustification, but by our sanctification; vntill wee see sinne purged, we may not thinke that it is pardoned; for whomsoever Christ frees from the damnation of sinne, he doth also deliuer from the dominion

Rom. 8 1

minion of sinne. From hence then we may be assured of the presence and abode of Gods Spirit in vs; which whoso hath not, partakes not of grace, is none of Christs, *Rom. 8. 9.* is none of Gods, *Gal. 4. 6.* *Because ye are sons, God hath sent the Spirit of his Son into your hearts.* If the Spirit of God hath taken vp its abode in thee, all the house shall fare the better for it; it will worke a holy change in thee, it will make thee a new creature, changing thy thoughts, words and workes, from euill vnto good. For as euery creature in nature hath a facultie to produce its kinde: (*Do men gather grapes of thornes*

thornes, or figges of thistles?

Mat. h. 6. 16. No, Thornes produce thornes) so a sanctified and a gracious heart brings forth fruits of holinesse and righteousness, fruits agreeable to the nature of the Spirit. If the holy Spirit of God once takes footing in the heart of a man, as the Idoll *Dagon* fell downe as soone as the Arke of God was brought neare vnto it: so down goes Satans throne; a man is no longer a slaue to his base lusts, no longer vnder the bondage of any one sinne: *For where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom and libertie; freedom from the slavery of any corruption, freedom from the*

2 Cor. 3.
17.

the bondage of any ruling sinne.

And last of all, eternall life hereafter, *Rom. 6.23.* *The gift of God is eternall life.* So *2 Theff. 2.16.* *Who hath giuen vs euerlasting saluation, and good hope through grace.* Thus haue I presumed through your patience to tarry a while vpon the explanation of the definition of that grace which is the fountaine and well-head from whence all grace is deriued vnto vs.

Now to proceed in the vnfoldings of the Differences betwixt true and counterfeit grace. The first difference (as hath bene said) lieth in the ground or root from whence true grace
D sprin-

And eternall life hereafter.

springeth. If thou wouldest not be deceiued, or mistaken about the truth of thy grace, doe but seriously consider with thy selfe, out of what soyle, or from what roote, that grace which appeareth, and peradventure thou beleeuest to be in thee, did spring and come forth; whether from the seed of God, from the presence and working of the Spirit, or out of Natures garden, or from education, or else out of some worldly, carnal, and by-respects; if it came not from God, it will quickly appeare in its proper colours, it will ere long discouer its rottennesse, it will vanish, perish, and come to nothing. Some

Some there be in whom the corruption of Nature is so restrained, that they are of a very ingenuous temper and disposition, affable, courteous, gentle, peaceable, not giuen vp, nor inclined vnto any exorbitant courses, not affecting any notorious vices, but rather hating and abhorring them: who comparing themselves with grosse sinners, and finding in themselves a freedome from those foule finnes which others are defiled withall, doe by and by blesse themselves in their owne hearts, yea, and it may be, they are taken of others (like or worse than themselves) to be maruel-

2 Tim. 3.
15.

lous good people, very religious and gracious persons: whose grace is no other, no better than meere civilitie, which is as farre from sanctitie and true grace, as chalke is from cheese, as the old saying is. Others also there be, who having beene well bred, piously and vertuously educated, sucking (it may be) the Scriptures with their mothers milke, as it is spoken of *Timothy*, brought vp in a family, where haply they had no euill example (though this be very rare) to corrupt them; doe hold on still that course into which they were entered young, and haue beene trained vp from their childhood,

hood, approouing of good duties, frequenting Gods house vpon all good occasions, vsing, and (which is more) delighting in the society of the people of God; and all this, not by vertue or strength of sauing grace, but through an habituated practise of godly exercises, so that they can say as the young man in the Gospell, *I haue obserued all these from my youth.* Are all these (thinke you) arguments strong enough to proue the truth of grace wrought in the heart of such a person? Then *Paul* his condition was good enough before his conuersion; for he was well educated, brought vp, and

Math. 19.
20.

liued after the strictest manner, touching the righteousness in the Law hee was vnrebukeable, yet hee accounts all this but as drosse and dung, as *Phil. 2. 8.* Gods worship and the performance of good duties through long vse may be growne into a very forme, wanting zeale & all spirituall vigour, or life in the performance of them; and will you say that the bare, naked, and customary performing of good duties, is a sure euidence of goodnesse in the heart of the doer of them? No, no, thou mayest be a Pharisaicall Angell, heare, reade, fast and pray by the strength of thine education,

tion, custome preuailing
so farre with thee, as to
necessitate the performance
of pious exercises, doing
good duties, because thou
hast alwayes done them,
and not through the power
and strength of true grace,
either inuiting thee, or in-
abling thee vnto the per-
formance of them. True
and sauing grace comes not
from nature and good
breeding, but from spiritu-
all regeneration; from vni-
on and communion with
Christ, who is the Head
which giues spirituall life
and motion vnto all his
members. Euery gracious
person is knit vnto Christ
by ioynts and bands, as
Col 2.19. These ligatures

Col 2.19.

D 4 are

are the graces of the Spirit, by which euery good heart being conglutinate, and grafted into Christ, drawes daily from him such spirituall strength, as inables him to the practice of good duties. So that if grace be truly wrought in thee, thou liuest in Christ, as a siene in the stocke, and Christ liues in thee, as the root liues in the branches: Then the minde and affection of Christ will be in thee, for he that is ioyned vnto the Lord is one spirit, *1 Cor. 6 17.* thou wilt doe good duties not of forme, but in faith, in loue, yea with a kinde of holy necessitie, as if it were thy nourishment, thy meat and thy

thy drinke, as Christ said,
*To doe the will of thy Father
which is in heauen.*

Others also there bee
which will outwardly ap-
peare very forward in the
performance of good du-
ties, they will not misse a
good Sermon, &c. as if
grace were truly wrought
in them; when as little, or
nothing at all is done by
them in loue to the dutie,
but loue of themselues, and
to by, if not base ends.

Some because they are
brought into a family,
where the ordinances of
God are daily on foot, and
where grace is in some re-
quest, thinke and know,
that vnlesse they conform
to good duties, and make

some shew of godlines, there will be no abiding for thē, they shal be nothing set by: whereupon they resolute to draw in the same yoke with others, (though good duties be in truth a very yoke vnto thē) and hold quarters with the rest of the family, putting on a vizard of grace, either to hedge in some fauor of their master, mistris, or some other of the family, or to be well esteemed of amongst the rest.

And there be others that will be forward in the best things, that so their masked godlineffe may bee a Lure to draw others to trade and commerce with them, that so they may with the lesse suspitiō prey vpon

vpon the simplicitie and innocencie of honest hearted people, with whom they hope (making a shew of godlines) to haue negotiation. Many such like there are, who in truth are no other than painted and garnished sepulchers, hauing within nothing but rottenness and corruption. Whereas true grace makes the childe of God to appeare and seeme to be godly, because he is so; & to practise goodnes, for the loue of goodnes, and not of goods, as many hypocrites doe.

A second and a maine difference betwixt sound and counterfeit grace, is proceeding and growth: false and counterfeit grace doth

2 Tim. 3.
13.

doth not, cannot grow better and better, but stands at a stay, or else is in some declension; *For euill men and deceiuers wax worse and worse, deceiuing and being deceived,* 2 Tim. 3. 13. whereas true grace is still of the mending hand, and growes many wayes.

I

A gracious person growes first of all into more acquaintance with his owne heart, *The heart is deceitfull and wicked aboue all things,* Ie. 17. 9. The hart of man hath in it a bottomlesse gulte of deceit: whence it comes to passe that wee and hardly bee brought to belecue how vile we are, and what wickednesse we are prone vnto. When the Prophet

Prophet had told *Hazael* what hauocke hee would make in Israel, how barbarously and cruelly hee would deale both with women and children, dashing their infants against the stones, and renting in peices their women with child, *2 King. 8. 12.* *Hazael* answers him with a kinde of abhorring such wickednesse, as if he were a beast rather than a man, if hee should act such mischief, *Am I a dog, &c?* Experience telleth vs that this wickednesse lay in his heart, as much as he seemed to abhorre the committing of it, at the hearing of it. And thus it is also with good men, who will
not

not belecue what euill lurketh in their hearts : as appeares by *Peter*, who being told by Christ, that they all would flinch from him, *Peter* (not knowing the imposture of his naughtie heart) replies, that whatsoever became of him hee would sticke to him; whereas of all other he most denied him. But after the Lord had looked vpon *Peter* with a gracious aspect, hee came to see, and to know his owne heart better than before; hee more sees, and obserues his owne vilenesse and vnworthinesse, for the more grace, the more sight of our corruption; as *Abraham*, the more familiar he grew with
God,

God, the more hee humbled and abased himselfe: This is one singular property of a good heart, the more grace it receiues from God, the more disgrace it doth cast vpon himselfe, in the sense of his owne vnworthinesse. After that *Iob* hauing heard of God by the eare, came to enioy a more cleare euidence of him by the eyes, presently he abhorres himselfe, and repents in dust and ashes, *Iob* 42.5, 6. *Paul* (after hee had tasted of grace,) confesseth himselfe a blasphemer, a persecutor, &c.

Secondly, a gracious person growes more and more into the hatred of his old

Iob 42.5,
6.

1 *Tim.* 1.
13.

Ez. 36. 32.

old pranks and courses;
He is ashamed and confounded for his former wayes,

Hos. 14. 9

Ezek. 36. 32. hee will no more of his old wayes, but sayes of them, as Ephraim of his Idols, Hosea 14. 9. What haue I to doe any more with Idols? As a child will no more play with that candle which hath burnt his finger and made it to smart: Euen so the child of God considering how little fruit there is in those things whereof he is now ashamed; calling to minde how many wayes sinne hath made him smart in his body, in his estate, in his name, in his conscience, he is now so farre from delighting in his old companion

nion, so far from harbouring so mischievous and hurtfull an inmate as sinne hath proued to be, that he can not brooke its sight, or presence; th^r more hee thinks of his old sinnes the more he abhorreth them, considering how much good a long time they hindered him of, and how much euill they haue brought vpon him. He sees before him a way of ioy and comfort vnto his soule, beset with many sweet and precious promises, adorned with many benefits and blessings: his heart is now so fixed vpon this way, that he growes more and more in loue with it; all other wayes, in comparison
of

of it, he hates and abhors, he will not exchange the new for the old, for all the world to boot.

3

Psal 42 1.

Thirdly, a gracious heart growes more and more into a longing for Christ: *As the Hart brayeth for the riuers of waters, so panteth his soule after Christ, his soule thirsteth after him.*

That fellowship and communion which hee hath with Christ in his holy ordinances, is most sweet and comfortable vnto his soule; and yet this hee knowes is but a glimpse of that comfort he shall partake of, at the appearing of the Lord Iesus: Therefore he longeth for that day, knowing that when Christ
his

his life shall appeare, then shall he also appeare with him in glory, *Coloff. 3. 4.*

Col. 3. 4.

Now take an hypocrite, and temporary professour at the best, and it will soone appeare that hee growes none of these wayes. First, hee growes not into acquaintance with his owne heart, for that doth euery day more & more deceiue him. Secondly, he growes not into a hatred of his old wayes, for hee is still the same he was, as rotten at the core as euer he was, and as well pleased now with his lusts as before; though happily for some by-respect he may seeme to forbear them, and hinder or surpresse the *Paroxysme*

roxysme and returne of them. Thirdly, as for lo-
 uing the appearing of the
 LORD CHRIST, hee
 doth it not, he cannot doe
 it heartily, whatsoeuer
 outwardly he may make
 shew of; for he cannot bee
 ignorant of that which
 Christ hath said of hypo-
 crites, which say, but doe
 not, or do all their workes
 to bee seene of men, and
 take Gods Couenant into
 their mouths, but hate to
 be reformed, that none of
 these shall escape the dam-
 nation that is to come. The
 consideration of which
 things, workes in them a
 dread of the dreadfull and
 terrible day of the Lords
 comming, wishing it might
 neuer

Mat. 21.

33.

neuer be, or euer be deferred.

A third difference, is in the failings and falling of those that bee endowed with true grace, and those that are hypocrites. For we may not say, that grace is perfect in the best of Gods children, because in this life, so long as we abide in this earthly tabernacle, we must looke for no perfection: in many things we sinne all; nay, the childe of God may haue many relapses into the same sinne, though he haue a sound heart, and labour to walke vprightly towards God, and men: yet there is a great deale of difference betwixt his relapses, and the

the falls of those whose hearts are not sound.

Rom. 7. 15

First of all, a gracious heart alloweth not of the committing of any sinne, *Rom. 7. 15. I allow not that which I doe.* If hee be pre-vented and ouertaken with any euill, he approoves not of it, his heart is not delighted or affected with the doing of it. When *Dauid* had numbred the people, the Text sayes that *his heart smote him, 2 Sam. 24. 10.* Which shewes, that though hee were ouertaken, yet hee did not allow of the euill hee had done. Whereas an hypocrite, howsoever hee may seeme outwardly to quarrell with himselfe, or to be angry

angry with his sinne, yet all is well betwixt his heart and his sin, as the Ferryman in the Boar, he lookes one way, though moues another. Hee wants that principle *Grace*, which alone opposeth sinne, and makes not onely the iudgement to mislike it, but checkes the conscience, and grieues the heart for it; whereas a wicked heart wanting this principle, may haply resolute against sinne, and promise better things: as *Pharoah* told *Moses*, that he would let the people of Israel go, but presently returns to his old hardnesse and stubbornnesse.

Therefore let all such as will either either speake against

gainst sinne, or confesse sin and seeme to be sorrie for sinne, and yet vpon euery occasion freely and readily returne to the practice of sinne, looke to themselves, for there be seuen abominations in their hearts, they are vnder the power of sin, they are in the snares of the deuill, being taken of him at his will. Howsoeuer where true grace is, there may be relapses through infirmitie, and violence of temptation, yet to take fire with euery little touch, to be drawne into sinne vpon euery little or light occasion, and to bee possessed with true grace are things vtterly incompatible.

Secondly, a gracious heart

heart is bettred by his fals.
He growes more and more
(as was said euen now) into
acquaintance with his own
heart: he sees his own frail-
tie, he is more fearefull of
falling, as the old saying is,
*The burnt child dreads the
fire.* He is more carefull of
his wayes, and watchfull
ouer himselfe, as one that
is climbing vp into a tree,
if one foot hath slipt, or the
bough broke on which
hee stood, how doth hee
tremble? how carefull is
he of sure footing, lest hee
fall? So the child of God
being by occasion fallen
into any fault, takes heed
vnto his steps, &c. gathers
his wits together, to keepe
himselſe vpriſht from fal-
E ling

ling againe; whereas the hypocrite is no whit at all bettered by any sin, something he may be terrified, there may be some pause, some forbearance, but no bettering: some say, a leg once broken, and well set againe, is stronger than before; it is true in grace, for this growes more strong after a fall than before. As appeares by *Peter*, who though at first he was shaken by the breath of a maiden, yet like a Cedar in *Lebanon* grew so strong after that death it selfe could not shake, or ouerturne him.

Thirdly, the falls of the righteous driue them closer vnto God by prayer
and

and godly sorrow. How was *Dauids* heart broken after his fall? What heart-broken petitions did he put vp vnto the Lord, to wash him thorowly from his iniquity, and to cleanse him from his sin, to create in him a cleane heart, to restore vnto him the ioy of his saluation, and to stablish him with his free Spirit? whereas a gracelesse heart is either senselesse of his danger, and GODS displeasure, and therefore seeks not to God by prayer, that so he may make his peace againe with God; or else if he be griped or stung a little, he seekes to allay his griefe by Musicke, as *Saul* did, or with

merry company or pastimes, to put it from him.

Rom 7.24

Fourthly, the falls of the godly make them to complaine of themselves, and cry-out vpon their sinne, as *Paul, Rom. 7.24. O wretched, &c. So David, Psal. 51. 3, 5.* whereas a gracelesse heart is ready to extenuate his sin; would none did worse than this; I hope this is not such an hainous matter: or else excuses himselfe, and ready to lay it vpon others. But the childe of God, with a kind of indignation aggrauates his sinne, abhorres it with a detestation, intreats the Lord for mercy in the pardon of that is past, and for aid to helpe him in time to come.

Last

Last of all, a gracious heart by his falls hath his heart knit more strongly vnto the Lord. O how much doth he thinke himselfe bound vnto God, for sparing and not confounding him? What shall hee render vnto the Lord, for bringing his soule out of the snares of the Deuill, and deliuering him from the danger into which sin had plunged him? He confesseth that it was Gods mercy that he was not consumed. And because God hath spared him, his soule is knit more strongly vnto the Lord, than euer before. I haue read (how true it is I know not) of a great kindnesse that a Li-

on did shew vnto a man, who had formerly pulled a thorne out of his foot; and will not grace teach a man (thinke you) to loue the Lord for doing greater things for him ? Nature teacheth vs , to loue those that preserue our our bodily liues , or haue rescued vs in extreame danger; and shall not grace doe this much more ? When the childe of God seeth how the Lord hath saued once more his soule from death, and againe kept him out of hell into which he was like (desperately) to haue fallen; such loue how shall he euer be able to requite ? how dares he forget such kindnesse ? When
he

he considers what the Lord hath done for his sinfull soule, his heart melts within him, and with hands and eyes lifted vp to heauen, hee tels the Lord from whence his helpe and deliuerance came, he tels the Lord (because the world shall know the thankfulnesse of his heart for mercy receiued) that his soule shall for euer praise him and all that is within him shall blesse his holy Name. He calls vpon his soule, as *David* did, to doe her dutie in this kind.

My soule praise thou the Lord, and forget not all his benefits, Psal. 103. 2.

So that you see there is a wonderfull great diffe-

E 4 rence

rence betwixt the falls of those that partake of grace, and such as want it. Howsoever sometimes a strong corruption & a violent temptation may shoulder out or keepe downe the worke of grace in Gods children, yet he is not pleased with this condition of his; for these relapses and prevarications of his, doe cost him hot water and the setting on, he hath many a gripe and sting, many a heart-breaking groane by them: whereas those that yeeld any voluntary subiection to their lusts, and giue their euill affections the reines; though sometime they may feele and expresse some gripes and horrors of conscience,

science, yet by that which hath beene spoken, it is evident, that they are farre from any euidence of true grace.

A fourth and last difference, 'twixt sound and counterfeit Grace, lyes in perseuerance. Counterfeit grace is but temporary, it lookes fresh, and scemes to flourish for a season; but euery little frost of aduersitie, or blast of trouble, nippes it in the head, and makes it giue in. If he perceiues that hee is like to misse of his hopes and projects, or some rubs will be in his way, or that his profession bring trouble or persecution; then he giues in, he thinks it is good slee-

ping in a whole skin, and therefore falls off, whatsoever profession hee hath formerly made: And that because hee wants a sound bottome, hee is not built vpon the Rocke Christ: his principles were from Nature, education, or the world; and not from vni-on and communion with Christ; his holy profession was taken vp vpon carnall and fleshly termes; not out of loue to pietie, but out of selfe-loue and by-respects, which whensoever they faile, his pietie quailes; if they faile or fall, they beare downe his godlineffe with them: whereas sound grace in an honest and good heart, being built
vpon

vpon a sure rocke, the foundation whereof is laid in Christ, holds it out in all stormes, he is no reed shaken with the wind, no wa- uering weather-cocke, no time-seruer; he knowes in whom he hath beleeued, and therefore abides the heat of Summer, the rage and violence of persecuti- on; he endures the frost in Winter, all those crosses and losses which befall him, still runneth with pa- tience that race which is set before him, *Heb. 12. 1.* So that it is with hypo- crites and counterfeit pro- fessors, as with many rot- ten and worme-eaten peares and plummies in a garden: looke vpon them, walke

by them and none so beautiful to the eye, none so lovely to behold as they, but lay hands vpon them, or shake the tree on which they grow, and downe they tumble presently; whereas that fruit which is sound, though it make not so faire a shew, hangs still for all your shaking. Gods people in this are like the Cedars of *Lebanon*, the stronger the wind blowes vpon them, the deeper root they take, the surer they stand.

Now in a few words to apply that which hath beene formerly deliuered concerning this point of difference. Let that which hath beene spoken, bee a meanes of sending vs euerie

rie one into the Closet of his owne heart ; let vs seriously search and trie our selves , that we be not mistaken about the truth of grace. It is a thing of the greatest consequence that can be , I meane , the triall of the truth and soundnesse of grace in vs ; for if we be deceiued in this one particular , wee are vndone for euer. A man may be mistaken in outward things, bee deceiued in worldly bargaines , and yet neuerthelesse a happy man : hee may saue his soule, though he lose his substance : but if he be gulled in the matter of grace, he is irrecoverably miserable. Doth it not then stand vs vpon, (as

I said before) to consider whether wee bee deceiued or not ?

If there were plenty of washt gold stirring, or great store of bad and counterfeit siluer abroad, euery one would looke what he takes, for feare he should be deceiued. O my beloued brethren, these are the dayes wherein many make faire shewes, godlinesse is growne (in appearance) into some credit amongst vs ; almost euery body would be accounted religious, but as for the power of Religion, and the truth of godlinesse (God knowes) it is found in very few : all is not gold that glisters, all haue not
gr ce

grace that are taken, and doe also take themselves to be gracious: A man may goe farre in outward appearance, and yet goe to hell in the end, for want of sauing grace. As for example.

First, a man may be free from grosse sinnes, from scandalous crimes, and enormous vices, yea, euen loath and detest many euils, as did the Scribes and Pharisees, *Luk. 18. 11.*

Secondly, a man may be strict in the duties of the second Table, iust of his word, true in his dealings, as many ciuill persons, and Gentiles doe by nature, *the things contained in the Law, Rom. 2.*

14. *Cato* and many other Heathens were admirable in respect of Morality.

Esay 58.
2, 3.

Thirdly, a man may set vp Gods seruice in his family, and giue himselfe to fasting and prayer, as the Iewes did, *Esay 58.2, 3.* Seeke God daily, know his wayes, enquire of God the ordinances of iustice, as a people that would doe righteously.

Mar. 6. 20.

Fourthly, a man may set vpon the worke of reformation, ioy in a good Sermon, reuerence Gods faithfull Ministers, as knowing and beleeuing that they are such as feare the Lord, and shew vnto him the way of saluation, as *Herod* did, *Mark. 6. 20.*

Lastly,

Lastly, a man may leaue his old courses and companions as *Simon Magus* did, *Act. 8.* he may be escaped from the filthinesse of the world through the knowledge of the Lord, and yet *returne with the dogge to his vomit*, and for want of sound and sauing grace bee damned in the end. Now seeing it may be thus tell mee in good sadnesse if thou dost not thinke it to be a matter of great importance to search and trie thine owne heart?

1 Pet. 2.20

How many thousands be there which come short of these things before-named? and yet take vp their rest, flatter themselues, and
speake

peake peace to their owne
soules, resolving to be no
other, desirous to bee no
better, and therefore neg-
lect this dutie of triall and
examination of themselves.

But assuredly a time will
come, when the conscien-
ces of these people (which
are now cast into a deepe,
if not a deadly sleepe) will
be awakened; when death,
iudgement, and hell will
present themselves vnto
their view; when their sins
like roades will croake ven-
geance against them, when
Ezekiels booke will be laid
open before them, where is
written within and with-
out, *lamentations and mour-
ning and woe*: Then what
howling? what roaring?
what

Ezek. 2.
10.

what wringing of hands, and breaking of hearts? to consider that old and new finnes doe bleed afresh before them; and that many thousand thousand reckonings are to be cleared betwixt the Lord and them, and they not able to answer one of many thousands. Then (when it will be too late) they will crie out vpon themselves, condemning their folly and madnesse, that they so trifled away their time, let slip the golden season of grace and mercy, passed ouer their soules to Satan for momentany bables and vanities.

Tell me then (my beloved) in coole bloud, if it
be

be not a point of high wisdom, to looke to this sometimes, not to trust our hearts too farre in this weightie matter, seeing our hearts are about measure deceitfull, and as those lying spirits in the mouths of *Ahabs* false prophets, will flatter vs, bid vs go on, and prosper, when we run to our owne destruction. I beseech you therefore (my beloued brethren) by the tender mercies of God, and in the bowels of the Lord Iesus, I entreat you to looke to your selues in this one particular: search and trie your owne hearts, how things stand betwixt the Lord and you; doe not desperately run on, as many

ny carelesse bankrupts do,
neuer minding to make
euen with their Creditor,
vntill the Baylisfe hath got-
ten them vnder arrest, if
not carried them into pri-
son. Slight not ouer these
things, lest hereafter, when
it will bee too late, you
finde and feele that to bee
true, which now you can-
not be brought to feare.

Consider (I say) with your
selues, what sinne is alieue in
you, what lust is crucified
in you: whether your life
be the life of grace, and
whether grace be truly be-
gun and settled in you. Doe
not thinke these things are
skar-crowes to mocke chil-
dren withall, and so slight
them ouer, for I tell thee,
if

if thou canst not finde leasure to search and trie thy wayes, that thou mayest turne vnto the Lord in seeking for grace, and suing for mercy, thou wilt not finde (I feare) leasure to escape the wrath of God, hell, and condemnation.

Of the Evidences of true and sound Grace.

Evidences
of true
Grace.

NOW I come to the third thing, which in the beginning I propounded, and that is, to consider of the evidences of true and sound grace: the which before I come vnto, it will not be amisse, to let you know, that the worke and
truth

truth of grace wrought in the heart of Gods childe, hath in Scripture sundrie appellations; though all signifying one and the same thing. Sometime it is called *Spirit*, as *Gal. 5.*

17. The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. Sometimes

Gal. 5. 17.

it is called *A new creature*,

2 Cor. 5. 17. If any man be in Christ, let him be a new crea-

2 Cor. 5. 17

ture. Sometimes, calling, as in diuers places of Scrip-

ture, Rom. 9. 24. Euen vs whom he hath called. 2 Pet.

Rom. 9. 24.

1. 10. Wherefore brethren, giue rather diligence to make your calling and election sure.

Sometimes, *Sanctification*, as *1 Pet. 1. 2. Elect according to the foreknowledge of God*

1 Pet. 1. 2.

the

the Father, unto sanctification of the Spirit. All which places tend to this purpose, to let vs know, that we are then spirituall, renued, or borne againe, effectually called and sanctified, when the worke of grace is truly wrought in vs: Which work sooner or later, more or lesse is wrought in euery one of Gods Elect: whereby he becomes purged from the former filthinesse of his flesh and spirit, and sanctified throughout: for as sinne, like an Epidemicall euill, diffused it selfe into all parts of a man; as Wine or Beere put into a mustie caske, is allequally tainted; so grace, if it enter into any, it sanctifies him through-

throughout; it puts a spirituall life, not into one or two parts, but into the whole man, renewing euery part and facultie of body and soule: For grace comes into the soule, as the soule comes into the body, not infused by degrees, though it be a maxime in Philosophy, that the heart first liues: which is not so so be vnderstood, as if life were some while there, when it is wanting to all other parts of the body, but because the heart is the seat (as it were) of life, and first of all moues, manifesting life about any other parts of the body. So grace is wrought at once, though it growes by degrees, be-

ing first weake, as is a babe before wee bee strong men in Christ. Know also, that though grace once wrought, be infused into the whole man, yet it shewes it selfe not alike in all faculties at all times, because of the contrary habit of corruption, which is stronger in some part and faculties of the body and soule, than in other some; yet if the life of grace bee inspired, it shewes it selfe more or lesse in the whole man. Thus much I thought fit to premise, to let you vnderstand, that if the truth of grace appeare in any one thing, though not in another, or but weakely, you may assure your selues
that

that you are truly regenerate, and so members of the Lord Iesus by spirituall vnion, neuer after to be rent off from him, as more largely hereafter shall be proued. Now to the Euidences.

The first Euidence of grace.

THe first euidence of sound grace, is a sanctified and sauing knowledge of Gods will reuealed in his Word. I call it sanctified, because it helps forward our Sanctification, *Iohn 17. 17. Sanctifie them with thy truth, thy Word is truth;* and I call it Sauing, because it tendeth

Sauing
Know-
ledge an
Euidence
of Grace.

to our saluation, as appears
Coloss. 1. 9. 20.

Col. 3. 10.

Phil. 2. 16

This Knowledge some
Diuines (vpon good
ground) doe make the
prime and first worke of
grace in Gods childe , and
the foundation of all other.
Hence *Coloss. 3. 10. The new
man is renewed in know-
ledge* : By new man , you
are to vnderstand (as was
said before) the worke of
grace. Hence it is that the
Gospell is called the *Word
of life, Phil. 2. 16.* because it
is a meanes of working,
and perfecting this life of
grace, as *1 Pet. 1. 23.* No
life of grace therefore can
be , where this Word hath
not beene (I vnderstand of
those that be of yeares and
capacitie)

capacitie) to worke the
knowledge of God and
Christ. Not that euery
 knowledge of God is life
 eternall, for there is a
 Knowledge of God which
 profits not, as may easily
 be proued.

Ioh.17.3.

First, all they which be-
 leue God to bee such an
 Essence, as may be expres-
 sed by any bodily likenesse,
 or the similitude of any
 creature, know not God a-
 right: for if wee conceiue
 God to bee like any thing
 that may be imagined, we
 fancy to our selues an Idol:
 we are to conceiue of God
 by way of negation, and
 to abstract him from all
 similitudes, *Esay 46.5, 9.*

Esay 46.5.

Therefore Papists, and

F 3 all

all other, which conceiue of God in a carnall and grosse manner, know not God aright, and so gaine litle benefit by their knowledge of him.

Secondly, they that beleeue not God to bee the chiefe Good, and the only thing to be desired, loued and feared, know him not aright. Such as cannot say as did *Dauid* of the Lord, *Psal. 73.25. Whom haue I in heauen but thee? I haue none in the earth to be desired in comparison with thee: receiue little benefit by their knowledge of God. Therefore all Mammonists and couetous persons, which prefer their riches before God; all Epicures and Bacchanals,*

Psa 73.25

chanals, which make their belly their god ; all voluptuous and sensuall persons which make their pleasures and honors their god, know not God aright to their benefit and comfort.

Lastly, all that know not God in Christ, receiue no benefit by their knowledge of God. To know God out of Christ, is to know him to be a terrible and angry God, taking vengeance vpon vs, for our iniquities and transgressions. Therefore if thou wouldest haue comfort by the knowledge of God, behold him in Christ, see his iustice satisfied, and his wrath appealed by that sa-

tisfaction and atonement which Christ hath made for thee so trusting to him for saluation. Which knowledge, because almost every one that liues within the pale of the Church, seemes to haue, we are to vnderstand, that this knowledge, if it bee meerely theoricall, will not saue vs; for it may be in the temporary beleeuer and hypocrite: therefore vnlesse this knowledge be sanctified, it is no euidence of grace, it profits not. How then may wee bee assured, that our knowledge is sanctified and sauing? By these effects:

First, knowledge, if it be sanctified, is operative, it

Y
Sauing
Know-
ledge.

Signes of
it.

Psa. 86. 11

it is a working knowledge,
it is an idle knowledge, but
reduced into practice, *Psal.*
86. 11. Teach me thy wayes,
O Lord, that I may walke in
thy truth. Grace teacheth a
man to put his knowledge
in practice. A gracious
heart had rather doe, and
not know, (if it could be)
than to know, and not to
do : he desires to be taught,
that he might walke, not
that he might talke, as too
many doe. Hence *Dauid,*
Psal. 119. 34. Giue me vn-
derstanding, and I will keepe
thy Law, yea, I will keepe it
with my whole heart. In say-
ing he would keepe Gods
Law, it shewes he was no
Temporizer in Religion,
which turns with the wind,

and runnes with the times ;
and adding *with his whole heart*, he shewes himselfe
to be no hypocrite, who is
hollow, not sincere in his
profession. Knowledge, it
sanctified, helps forward
our obedience, resteth not
in speculation, but pro-
ceeds vnto practice.

Temporizers and hy-
pocrites seeke after know-
ledge, rather to inform their
iudgement, than reforme
their liues ; rather to teach
others, than to teach them-
selues. This knowledge wil
not saue, but deceiue vs,
Iam. 1. 22, 23, 24. That is
the good and honest heart,
who hauing receiued the
word, keeps it, and *brings*
forth fruit, Luk. 8. 15. The
word

*Iam. 1. 22,
23, 24.*

Luk. 8. 15.

word is a sanctifying, a fruitfull word where grace is. The knowledge of gracelesse persons is a barren knowledge, they know, but do not; and this kind of knowledge is no better than ignorance in Gods account, 1 Ioh. 2-4, 5. *He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his Commandements, is a lyer, and the truth is not in him:* by keeping his Word, we know we are in him. Hence it is, that in the first of Sam. 2. 12. *The sonnes of Eli were said to be wicked men, and knew not the Lord.* How could this bee? *Eli* the Priest and Iudge, his children, those that attended vpon the Altar, and receiued the offerings, and yet knew

1 Ioh. 2. 4.
5.

1 Sam. 2.
12.

knew not the Lord? No, their liues being vicious, and themselues prophane, they did not expresse in their carriage any feare of God, they were as those that knew not the Lord. Such as professe they know, if they be disobedient, and to good workes reprobate, are (for all their knowledge) abominable; where knowledge abides in the braine or lip, and neuer comes so low as the heart and hand, this knowledge makes way to conviction and deeper condemnation.

Hee that knowes much but doth little, knowes nothing as he ought to know. Knowledge without practice

Etice is a gracelesse knowledge. Science ioyned with conscience giueth strong euidence of true grace and the gracious presence of the Spirit of God; which holy Spirit did neuer shine into that mans heart by supernaturall light of sauing knowledge, where there is either ioy in, or fellowship with the vnfruitfull workes of darkenesse: Therefore if thou knowest, but doest not, thou hast a fearefull doome. *That earth which beareth thornes and briers is reprovved, and is neere vnto cursing, Heb. 6. 8.* Who could indure that tree to stand, which being planted in a fruitfull soile is barren. *Cut it downe, why combreth it*

it the ground? Luk. 13.7. Euery tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewen downe, and cast into the fire, Mat. 3.10.

2

Secondly, Sauing knowledge is a transforming knowledge, such a knowledge as doth cast a man into another fashion, it moulds him according vnto the Word, 2 Cor. 3. 18. *We behold as in a mirror, the glory of the Lord with open face, and are changed into the same Image, from glory to glory. Whereas knowledge vnsanctified leaues a person as it found him, vnlesse peradventure he be growne worse by his knowledge. The knowledge of gracelesse persons*
wan-

wanteth both metall and making: If it transformes them not, they haue but a *forme of knowledge*, as *Rom. 2.20.* Now what difference there is betwixt the thing it selfe, and a forme of it, a liuing man and his picture, it will be needlesse for me to relate vnto you: the same, in a sort, is betwixt a formall and a sanctified knowledge: the former neuer moues the heart to God, nor yet remoues it from euill: the latter both purifieth the heart, and re-ctifieth the life.

Thirdly, Sauing Knowledge vents it selfe for the honour and glory of God, and the good of others. A gracious heart so opens his lips,

Psa. 51. 15

Pro. 10. 21

lips, as his mouth may shew forth the praises of God, Psal. 51. 15. So also he desires that his lips may feed many, Pro. 10. 21. Hee talkes to edifie; for grace is communicatiue as well as operative, like to that oymntment of Spikenard wherewith Mary anointed I E S V S, which filled the whole house with the fauour thereof, Ioh. 12. 3. where grace is in the heart, the lips are of dropping of some heavenly counsell, comfort and instructions, such as may tend to the enlargement of Christs kingdome: whereas gracelesse persons seeke to set vp themselves by their knowledge; it may be they know
much

much of God and Christ,
but know little for God
and Christ. How few
poore soules haue beene
brought home to Christ,
by the great knowledge of
many, who haue a great
name and fame of learning
and profoundnesse? How
many be there who strue
for honours and prefer-
ment, and had rather bee
accounted great Artists,
than faithfull Labourers in
the Lords Vineyard, im-
proouing their Talents to
Gods glory, and the good
and saluation of those
poore soules that are com-
mitted to their care and
charge? The Locusts of
Rome will rise vp in iudge-
ment against all such vn-
profita-

profitable seruants : for they compasse sea and land to make a profelyte; they studie and labour night and day to aduance and increase the kingdome of Antichrist : but these are so wedded to their ease, and to their lusts, that they haue no heart to take any paines for the LORD CHRIST.

4

Fourthly, and lastly, if thy knowledge be sanctified, it is a growing knowledge. Neuer was that person borne againe of that immortall seed of the Word and Spirit, both which are full of life, and mightie in operation, who doth not endeouour to goe on

on and on from one grace vnto another, ioyning with knowledge temperance, and with temperance patience, and with patience godlinesse, and with godlinesse brotherly kindnesse, and with brotherly kindnesse loue, 2 Pet. 1. 6, 7. Thus adding grace vnto grace, vntill he be filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Iesus Christ, vnto the praise, and glory of God, Phil. 1. 11. The more thou knowest, the more thou desirest to adde to that which thou hast. As a new borne babe thou desirest the sincere milke of the Word, that thou mayest grow in it, 1 Pet. 2. 2. This growth I beleue is not meant of the letter onely and

1 Pet. 2. 2.

Ier. 15. 16

and vnderstanding, but especially of the feeling and power of the Word, every day finding more comfort, and tasting more sweetnesse in the same. So that the Word, as *Ier. 15. 16.* is *the ioy and reioycing of thine heart*: It is sweeter to thy taste, *than the hony or the honey-combe*, *Psalme 19. 10.* And more esteemed *than thine appointed food*, *Ioh. 23. 12.* Thus if thy knowledge bee sanctified, it groweth in thee, and thou growth into it. And this growest ariseth from two properties in a gracious heart: First, hee receiueth the Word in *thesi*, in the generall, and then he applyeth it to himselfe in

in *hypothesis*; in the particular.

First, a gracious heart puts his hand and seale vn-to euery diuine truth, beleeuing and embracing all those truths he meets withall, whether they be threatnings, promises, or precepts, as *Cornelius* and his company said, *We are here present before God, to heare all things that are commanded of God, Act. 10. 33.* Receiuing the Word, as did these Noble *Bereans*, with all readinesse, *Act. 17. 11.* This shewes the soundnesse of his spirituall constitution, and the goodnesse of his heart; for as it is in nature, a sound constitution feeds heartily vpon any
good

1 Cor. 2.4

good creature prouided for him, refuseth nothing that is mans meat, wholesome and good; whereas a bad stomacke will pingle, and picke here a bit and there a bit, taking little or no content in any meates, but those that are daintily cooked, or curiously dressed; euen so it fareth with a naughtie heart; vnlesse the Word be neatly handled, spiced with humane oratory, and set out with the inticing speech of mans wisdom, it saouours not to his carnall palat, he findes no more relish in it, than in the white of an egge.

Againe, a gracious heart makes a particular application of the Word, as spoken

ken and belonging vnto him; that part of the Word which doth most neerely concerne him, he laies surest hold of, and will not part withall. Grace will teach a man to welcome & make much of that Word which makes most against his sin; and likes that preaching best, which doth best discover the secrets of his heart; & most lively set out the filthinesse of his corruptions: whereas a naughtie heart swells against that Word; which closeth with his bosome sins, he brookes not the Word, because (as the Pharisees said) it puts him to rebuke.

Now then to make vse of this point. Is it so, that
sancti-

vse.

sanctified knowledge is a sure euidence of true grace: this then may speake heauily, first to the heart of all ignorant persons; they must know that their condition is dangerous, deadly, damnable, because gracelesse; and it is gracelesse, because they are ignorant, wanting sauing knowledge. An ignorant heart must needs bee a naughtie heart, because *without knowledge the minde cannot be good, Prou. 19.2.* What goodnesse can possibly be where Gods Spirit is not? Ignorance doth manifest the want of the Spirit: *For the Spirit is giuen vnto vs, that we might know the things that are giuen*

Prou. 19.2.

uen to vs of God, as 1 Cor.

2. 12. Therefore, when any know not the things of God, needfull to bee knowne, it is euident that they want the Spirit of God. And yet how hardly can this be beaten into an ignorant head? They will not beleue they want grace, or that the Deuill hath them in his snare, or that they are taken captiue by him at his will; yet thus they are, vntill they bee brought to repentance, *That they may know the truth,* 2 Tim. 2. 25, 26. O the lamentable condition of ignorant persons, especially such as are folded vp in the mantle of their owne conceitednesse! for many

2 Tim. 2
25, 26.

G of

of these, though they bee ignorant of the truth, yet the Father of lyes, their lord & master, hath taught them to cauill against the Word, and to lay downe excuses for themselves, that they are not booke-learned, that they haue no leasure, or that they haue a good heart, though they cannot talke as many doe, that so he may with-hold from them the truth in vn-righteousnesse. O the heauie doome that belongs to those that *haue eyes and see not, eares but heare not, hearts and vnderstand not, that they might conuert and be healed!*

Esay 6. 10.

Esay 6. 10. This is the condemnation, that light is come amongst them, and they loue darkenesse

darkenesse rather than light,
Ioh. 3.19. The Lord Iesus
 shall shew himselfe from hea-
 uen with his mighty Angels,
 in flaming fire, rendring ven-
 geance to ignorant persons,
2 Theff. 1.7,8. For as Hell
 is appointed to be the ha-
 bitation of the wicked, so
 this is the place of him that
 knoweth not God, *Iob 18.21.*

Ioh. 3.19.

Mee thinkes then this
 should set vp the price and
 worth of knowledge, set
 an edge vpon our appetite,
 and make vs call after know-
 ledge, and cry for understand-
 ing: To seeke her as siluer,
 and search for her as for trea-
 sures, as *Prou. 2.3,4.* O
 the paines that men take,
 the dangers they vndergoe
 in the mines to digge out,

and fetch forth siluer and treasure out of the earth; which when they haue gotten, they haue got iust nothing, if we will credit *Salomon*, nothing in comparison of knowledge. For *riches auaille not in the day of wrath*, *Prou. 11.4.* Neither siluer nor gold shall be able to deliuer in the euill day, *Zeph. 1. 18.* Whereas, if wisdome entreth into thy heart, and knowledge delighteth thy soule, then shall counsell preserue thee, and vnderstanding shall keepe thee, and deliuer thee from the euill way, *Prou. 2. 10, 11, 12.* Therefore, aboue all gettings, get knowledge, aboue all increasings, grow in knowledge, *2 Pet. 3. 18.*

*Pio. 2. 10,
11, 12.*

2 Pet. 3. 18

Secondly,

2 Vse.

Secondly, make we tri-
all of our knowledge whe-
ther it be rightly qualified;
what vse thou makest of
thy knowledge, and whe-
ther thou doest improue it
to Gods glory, others be-
nefit and thine owne sal-
uation. If thy knowledge
be a barren and gracelesse
knowledge; woe worth
the time that euer thou
knowest, for in some sort
it may be applied to thee,
which the Preacher speakes
*Eccle. 1. 18. He that increa-
seth knowledge, increaseth
sorrow. For thou shalt be bea-
ten with many stripes, Luke*
12. 47. Consider therefore
what life and power is in
thy knowledge. Many a-
bound in knowledge, but

Eccle. 1. 18.

*Luk. 12.
47.*

1 Theff. 1.
5.

their knowledge is so weak and feeble, that it is vnable to withstand any corruption, or to keepe vnder any one sinne, in them. It is said of the Thessalonians, *That the Gospell was vnto them not in word onely, but in power, 1 Theff. 1. 5.* Would you know what is meant by power? Euen that force wherewith God doth open the hearts of his Elect to belceue, and that strength of the word whereby they are regenerate, and made new creatures. Hath thy knowledge manifested any such vertue, and power in thee? Then it is a sauing and sanctified knowledge; else but a weake and vnprofitable knowledge. Therefore

fore that for time to come thou mayest haue thy knowledge more powerfull to subdue thy corruptions, obserue these few directions following :

First, consider with thy selfe wherefore God hath endued thee with knowledge; euen to make thee to differ from others, in thy life and practice, and that thou shouldest bee a light vnto others, *Phil. 2.*

15, 16. That yee may bee blamelesse and pure, and the sonnes of God, without rebuke in the midst of a naughty and crooked nation, amongst whom yee shine as lights in the world, holding forth the Word of life. Thy knowledge should make thee

Phil. 2 15, 16

a light. True light retaines its light in whatsoeuer darknesse it shines; so thy knoweldge, if it be sanctified, will teach thee to gouerne thy selfe, to looke to thine owne feet, and to direct thine owne wayes; and if it fall out that thou beest cast amongst the children of darknesse, yet their darknesse shall not be able to extinguish and put out thy light, that is, make thee goe, or doe against thy knowledge, but thy light will bee able to discover their darknesse, and to guide and direct thee. Again, true light, as it hath light in it selfe, and retaines that light, not extinguished by others darknesse, so doth

it communicate light to others; whersoever it shines, others do or may partake of it, receiving benefit by it, and comfort from it. So thy knowledge, if it be sanctified, will tend and bend it selfe to the edifying of others. *For the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withall,* 1 Cor. 12. 7. Every good disposer of the grace of God, as he hath received the gift, will minister the same to others, 1 Pet. 4. 10. Looke to it therefore, thou hast much to answer for, who hast received much knowledge, and certainly, if thou doest not good with thy knowledge, thou wilt do harme with it: thy sin will be ex-

1 Cor. 12. 7

1 Pet. 4. 10

emplary, thou wilt draw on others vnto euill, they taking heart and being emboldned by thine example, as appeares, 1 Cor. 8. 10, 11. Now how will thy knowledge doe good to others, if it doth thy selfe none? as it doth not if sin, be as powerfull in thee, as if thou haddest no knowledge.

2

Secondly, thou must side with thy knowledge against thy corruptions: What good will a sword doe to any man, if he take it not into his haud, and put strength vnto it? Helpe thy knowledge to fight against thy corruptions: take part with thy knowledge against thy *lusts which fight*
against

against thy soule, 1 Pet. 2. 11.
Thy lusts are too strong
of themselves, adde not
thou more strength vnto
them, by yeelding vnto
them. When thy know-
ledge telleth thee that these
and these things must not
bee, ioyne issue with thy
knowledge, and say as *Io-
seph* did, *How can I doe this
euill, and sinne against God,*
Gen. 39. 9. I tell thee, it is a
griuous euill to sin against
knowledge, when a mans
knowledge within cries
out to the contrary: this
will make bloody wounds,
and strike deepe gashes one
day into thy conscience. In
the meane time thou art in a
fearefull condition, if thou
allowest thy selfe in the
practice

1 Pet. 2. 11

Gen. 39 9

practice of any one sinne,
condemned by thy know-
ledge; for thou lyest open
vnto any kinde of impiety,
yea to any error, euen vn-
to Popery; for that person
which denyeth the power
of godlinesse, will easily
be brought to forsake the
profession thereof: if one
sinne loued and delighted
in, be enough to pull a man
from God to the deuill,
yea, into hell; may it not
then pull a man into Pope-
ry? A wicked gracelesse
person is a fit piece of
stuffe to make a Papist of.
He that will not bee per-
swaded, nor brought to
leauē his sinne for the truth
sake, will easily be perswa-
ded to leauē the truth for
his

his finnes sake. How much better had it beene for such a one neuer to haue known the way of righteousnesse, *than to turne away from that holy commandement giuen unto him?* 2Pet.2.21.

2 Pet. 2. 21

Thirdly, be instant and earnest with the Lord in prayer, that he would manifest his power in thy weakenesse, that he by his holy Spirit would conuey some life and power into thy knowledge, that by the practice thereof thou maist manifest the life of thy knowledge in all obedience and good conscience. To this purpose *Dauid* makes many petitions to the Lord, *Psal. 119. 88. Quicken me according to thy lo-
uing*

3

*uing kindnesse, so shall I keepe
the testimony of thy mouth.*

The Scribes and Pharisees knew the letter of the Law, and were perfect in the Scriptures, but the Lord by his Spirit had not taught them, and therefore there was no spirituall life nor power in their knowledge. Howfocuer they boasted of their knowledge, and thought scorne to be taught of others, yet their knowledge being but a dead knowledge, did increase their iudgement; as appeares by those words of Christ, *Ioh. 9. 41. If yee were blind, ye should not haue sinne, but now yee say, We see, therefore your sinne remaineth.*

A

*A second Evidence
of Grace.*

THe next Evidence of Grace is *Faith*, which followeth Knowledge, as the frame doth the foundation; for vntill such time as the mind be inlightned with the truth, no man can beleeue. There must be knowledge, or else there can be no faith: *Wee haue knowne and beleeued*, saith *Iohn*.

No man can beleeue in Christ without the knowledge of him; *For how shall they beleeue in him, of whom they haue not heard?* *Rom. 10.14.*

Faith must needs be an
evidence

Faith.

1 Ioh. 4. 16

evidence of grace, because it is a speciall and a principall part and member thereof: not the fountaine of all other graces (as some doe hold) nor the root, out of which all fruits of sanctitie doe spring. For iustification, sanctification, faith, repentance, and all other graces are habitually infused by the Spirit of God, at one and the selfsame time in the act of regeneration; but in respect of vs, that is, of our apprehension, and application, one grace goeth before another, as the lightning comes to our sense, and is seene before the thunder-clap bee heard, our sight being more nimble, and
appre-

apprehensiuē than our hearing is: yet lightning and thunder are caused both together. So all graces (as was formerly said) are wrought at once, in one instant, though some appeare before othersome, and may helpe forward other graces (as faith doth) not beget other graces, as some doe affirme. For the soule must first be endued with the life of grace before it can beleeue, vnlesse we will say, that faith may be in a gracelesse heart: which cannot be, because being regenerate and sanctified by the Spirit, wee come to beleeue, and to rest vpon the promise for the remission of sinnes, and saluation

Gal. 5. 22.

uation by Iesus Christ. S. Paul calls *Faith*, a fruit of the Spirit, by whom we are sanctified, therefore it cannot be the efficient cause of our sanctification. It is true that Paul hath a passage tending that way, *Act. 26. 18.* That they may receiue forgiuenesse of sinnes, and inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith; but by the Word sanctified we are to vnderstand the fruit, not the grace of sanctification: we are dead in sinnes, vntill such time as we come to be quickned by the Spirit, *Ioh. 6. 3.* It is the Spirit which infuseth all diuine qualiries into the soule. The Apostle calleth them *the fruits of the Spirit*,
Gal.

Gal. 5. 22, 23. Amongst which fruits, Faith is one of the principall, as that which puts a kinde of liue-lihood into all other graces; and therefore after a certaine manner may bee said to sanctifie vs: For according to the strength of faith, will be the power of other graces, hope, loue, &c. If faith be weake, hope and loue cannot be strong; little faith, little hope, little loue; no faith, no hope, no loue at all. So that faith must needs be a sound euidence of grace; for vntill such time as the heart bee purified, and washed in the lauer of regeneration, it is either Atheisticall to depraue the Word of God,
by

by doubting of diuine truths, if not denying them; or else it is Sophisticall to peruert and wrest the Word, so as oft-times bloud commeth out of it to choake and strangle Gods people, in stead of milke to feed and nourish them. But if the heart be once sanctified by the Spirit, then is faith wrought in vs, which doth further, and more effectually cleanse and purifie vs through the Word, *Ioh. 15. 3.* Now because as in the former euidence of grace, so in this also many a man and woman is mistaken, the heart being so infinitely deceitfull; it will be no lost labour to examine the truth of our faith.

For

For you must know that it is possible for a wicked and gracelesse person to beleue that Christ died for him; yea to die in a strong perswasion of Gods loue and fauour, and so of his owne saluation. Hath not experience taught vs thus much? Who so confident, who so full of faith (if you will beleue them) as many vile wretches and gracelesse persons? They wonder what people mean to doubt of Gods loue; for their part they neuer, as yet, called it into question. They thanke God they haue euer had as strong a faith as the best, and so they hope to continue. This is euident by examples in the
Scrip-

Mica. 3. 11

Scripture. The Lord by the Prophet *Jeremie* speaks to the wicked Iewes, which had polluted the Land with their whoredomes and malice, which had a whores fore-head, and would not bee ashamed, saying, *Didst thou not still crie vnto mee, Thou art my Father, and the guide of my youth?* So in *Mica. 3. 11.* The Lord speaking of corrupt Iudges, of mercenary Priests and merchandizing Prophets, which set the Word to sale, and prophesie for money, saith, *that yet will they leane vpon the Lord and say, is not the Lord among vs? no euill can come vpon vs.* By which it appears, that wicked and
grace-

gracelesse people may bee confident of Gods fauour.

How then may wee distinguish the faith of Gods children, from the faith or rather presumption of vn-belieeuers?

There lyes a great difference betwixt them.

The first difference is in the ground, out of which true faith springs, or the meanes by which it is wrought in true belieeuers.

True faith is wrought in all Gods children by the ministry of the Word, as *Rom. 10. 17*. First, the Law conuincing vs, discovering vnto vs our sins, *Rom. 7. 7*. shewing vs both the nature and the danger of them, and our misery

I
Differēce
twixt
Faith and
presump-
tion.

Ro. 10. 17

fery into which sinne hath plunged vs ; and not onely so, but an vtter impossibility of our selues, either to satisfie the iustice of God for the least transgression, or to be freed from that wrath and vengeance which hangs ouer our head, by reason of our sins. The consideration whereof terrifying and afflicting a poore sinner, makes him to cry out as the Iewes did *Act. 2. 37. What shall I doe?* Then commeth in the Gospell, the Word of comfort, and the message of reconciliation, which discouers and prescribes a remedie, whereby a poore sinner may be brought into fauour with God, and
accepted

Act 2. 37.

accepted with him; come out of the snares of the de- uill, and be freed from the curse and malediction of the Law; and that is, by re- ceiuing of the Lord Christ, in whom *all the promises of God are yea and Amen.* And by whom wee haue re- demption through his blood, euen the forgiveness of sins, *Ephes. 1.7.* Whereupon he begins to hunger and thirst after Christ, seeing and knowing no other way, no other meanes whereby he may be saued, or haue his spirituall wants supplied, As the prodigall saw no meanes of comfort, but starue he must, vnlesse he get home againe, and bee receiued into his fathers family.

2 Cor. i.

20.

Ephes. i. 7.

family ; so the poore sinner knowes his soule will famish , if he get not into Christ ; and therefore hee labours to bee made one with Christ ; his soule hungers and thirsts after nothing so much as Christ : all the world is dung vnto him in comparison of Christ. Oh that hee may be found in Christ : to liue or dye , Christ is all in all vnto him ; he laies hold vpon his righteousness , and throwds himselfe for comfort vnder his wings : and as *Ioab* layd hold vpon the horns of the Altar , saying , *I will dye heere , 1 Kings 2. 30.* So the poore beleeuers layes hold vpon the Lord Christ , resteth only vpon Christ,

Christ, and if he perish, he will perish at the feet of Christ; whereas the faith of vnbelceuers and hypocrites ariseth either out of their education, common illumination, or from some vaine perswasion of some good in themselves, for which they are perswaded God loues them, or else he would neuer haue bestowed so much vpon them, haue done these or these things for them. So that their faith is no other than a faithlesse confidence, a vain presumption, or some Satanicall illusion, neuer wrought in them by the Lord CHRIST, the Author and finisher of our faith, Heb. 12. 2. by the ministry

Heb. 12. 2.

of his Word. For they were neuer throughly humbled, or if they were, it was but for a while, a little Sermon-sicke, their consciences wambling, while the Word was delivered vnto them, and no longer; If this mans faith had been begun, or hee begotten againe of the Word of God; as a new borne babe hee would more and more desire it, *that he might grow thereby*, 1 Pet. 2.2. for wee are nourished with that, by which wee are begotten: but he finds no sweetnesse, takes no true content in the Word, any further than he is sensible of some art or some noueltie in the same, which doth affect and delight

light him. Tell mee then (thou that boastest or presumest so much of thy faith) how thou diddest attaine vnto it, when it was first wrought in thee; which if thou canst not, thou hast iust cause to feare, thy faith is but thy fancie.

Heere a question will fall in very fit to be answered, and that is, Whether euery one that belecueth can tell when or how faith was wrought in him?

This scruple and scrutiny hath troubled many a deare childe of God, who hath beene ready to question the truth of their faith, because they cannot precisely lay downe the time

H 3 when

when, or the meanes how
faith was wrought in them.
For, their education and
bringing vp was alwayes
godly and religious; from
their child-hood they haue
entertained the Word of
God; they haue alwayes
borne a good will to god-
linesse, and loued the pro-
fessours of the truth; al-
waies approued of the best
things, and therefore que-
stion the truth of faith and
grace in them. For the cō-
fort of such, let me first of
all tell them, that if all were
not well, twenty to one the
deuil would not be so busie
with them, to perplexe and
trouble them with these pi-
ous feares and holy doub-
tings. We seldome heare
or

or reade of any but the
Lords people, that haue
these troubles, or that put
these doubts & questions.

But for the satisfying of
thy scruple; consider first
what Christ said to *Nico-*
demus, *Ioh. 3. 8. The wind*
bloweth where it listeth, &c.

Ioh. 3. 8.

The meaning of which
words, is to teach vs that
the operations of grace are
sometimes, as it were, hid
from the regenerate them-
selues, neither knowing
the time when they first
began to work, nor whēce
they sprung, nor to what
measure they will grow.

Therefore though thou
canst not tell by what
meanes, or at what time
the Spirit of God com-

H 4

meth

meth into thine heart, or how at first, its quickning and sanctifying presence gaue spirituall life vnto thy soule: yet blessed and happy is thy condition, if thou now findest faith to be wrought in thee, which thou mayest be assured of, if thou findest thy soule enlightned with the sauing knowledge and vnderstanding of the truth, if thou hast beene abased and humbled vnder the hand of God, in the sight and sense of thy vnworthinesse, and if thou prizest Christ aboue all the world, labouring to winne him, and desiring to be found in him, *not hauing thine owne righteousnessse, but that which is through*

Phil. 3. 9.
10.

through the faith of Christ, even the righteousness which is of God through faith, Phil. 3.9, 10. But if thou findest not these to be in thee, then thou mayest well question the truth of thy faith.

A second difference lies in the fruits and effects of faith: Where grace is, *faith workes by love*, Gal. 5.6. A heart knowing and believing what the Lord hath done for it, cannot but *love much*, Luk. 7.47. being so dearly beloved. And this love of God workes the heart to a hatred of all things displeasing unto God, Psal. 97. 10. and to a practice of that which he requireth, Psal. 26.3. Thy

H 5

loving

2

Gal. 5. 6.

Psal. 97, 10

Psal. 26 3

louing kindnesse is before mine eyes, therefore haue I walked in thy truth. Whereas the faith of the vnregenerate works no change in him, makes him no better than hee was, vnlesse it be in shew and appearance. Confidence of Gods loue emboldens him to wickednesse, and makes him to sin more and more, as *Ier. 3. 4, 5.* rather than abate sin in him. Certainly, if euer the Lord spake peace to thy soule through Christ, hee will so enflame thine heart with the loue of his truth, his Image, his ordinances, that these will so take vp thy heart, that thou shalt not turne againe vnto euill, *Psal. 85. 8.*

Psal. 85. 8

Thirdly

Thirdly and lastly, faith in the regenerate makes the heart to stoope to Christs Scepter, to *heare his voice and follow him*. It is faith which apprehends the authority and soueraigntie which CHRIST hath ouer vs; and approues of the holines and goodnes of his Conmandements, and so inclines the heart vnto a willing and cheerefull obedience. Whereas the hypocrites faith doth embolden him vnto liqerty, it makes him loose and licentious, laying all vpon Christs back, saying, Christ dyed for vs, his blood shall cleanse vs, &c. Let the Ministers of Christ say what they can, it will

Ioh. 10. 27.

what they will, they are resolved to hold on, they will not shift one foot, nor stir any further than they list. Let iudgements be threatned against them, threatned folke (they say) live long; they can laugh in their sleeves at the zeale of Gods seruants; no more moued, or remoued with a Sermon, than with the wagging of a straw. Oh take heed therefore, that thou beest not deceined in the truth of thy faith: Thou mayest haue a great deale of carnall confidence, and bold presumption, and yet not one dram of true sauing faith. Take heed, brethren, lest at any time there be in any of you an euill heart,
and

Heb. 3. 12.

and vnfaithfull, to depart away from the liuing God. Do not thinke that thy coming to Church, thy hearing of Christ preached, and receiuing of the Sacraments, are infallible euidences of true faith; for many thousands who take vp their Religion vpon trust, and take themselves to be sound beleeuers, haue their hearts fraught with vnbeliefe, their faith being no better, nay scarce so good as the faith of deuils, for they tremble at the power and displeasure of the Lord, whereas these are not once touched, nor any thing affected therewith. And this shall suffice to haue spoken of faith, the
second

second Euidence of true
Grace.

A third Euidence of Grace.

Subduing
of our
lusts.

1 Cor. 9. 27

Gal. 5. 17.

NOW I come to the
third Euidence of true
Grace, and that is the sub-
duing of our Lusts, and the
conquering of our corrup-
tions. This is meant by
those words of *Paul, I beat
downe my body, and bring it
into subiection.* By body the
Apostle doth meane the
old man, sinne and corrup-
tion, which doth lust a-
gainst the Spirit. All such
as are truly regenerate by
the quickning power of the
Spirit, are sanctified (as
was said before) in all the
faculties

faculties of their soules,
and members of their bo-
dies : not only inlightned
in their iudgements to dis-
like that which is euill, but
their hearts and wills also
are set against it. They
know that all fleshly lusts
doe fight against their
soules, and therefore they
maintaine open warre with
them, and will not yeeld
any voluntary obedience
or subiection vnto them.
Grace cannot stand with
the regiment of sinne. For
as *Paul* saith, *Sinne shall not*
haue dominion ouer you, for
ye are not vnder the Law,
but vnder Grace. Howsoe-
uer the Lord (to checke
the securitie, presumption,
pride, selfe-conceitednesse,
and

Rom. 6. 14

ROBI. 7. 24

and vnthankfulnesse of his children) may for a while leaue them vnto themselves, and with-draw (as it were) the powerfull presence of his grace , whereby corruption may bustle, swell, yea and breake forth also ; yet by the power of grace, they shall be brought againe to mislike, and condemne themselves for those euils wherewith they haue beene ouer-taken, and crie out with *Paul*, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliuer me from the body of this death!* Therefore the Anabaptists and others are foully mistaken, who hold that after the worke of grace is once truly wrought in a man, sinne hath no being

ing in him that is regenerate: for you must know that in every one that is regenerate, there is flesh as well as the Spirit: in every faculty there is grace inclining the heart to goodnesse; and there is corruption like a backe-bias, drawing it the contrary way. For grace and corruption in every regenerate person (as *Iacob and Esau did strive in Rebecca's womb*) are evermore struggling and striving one with the other: yea there is a continuall warre betwixt them as was betweene the House of *David* and the House of *Saul*; but as the House of *David* waxed stronger, and the House of *Saul* weaker:

So

2 Sam. 3. 1

So fares it betweene Grace and corruption; the flesh may strive, but the Spirit overcomes: for by vertue of habituall grace infused, the will is so sanctified, the affections are so rectified, the heart is so purified, as the whole man resignes vp himselfe to be at Gods service, imbraceth a holy and a heavenly life, as the only true comfort and sound happinesse, and desires and resolves so to hold on, even vnto the end. Therefore they are grossely deceiued, who hold that after the work of grace is wrought in the heart of Gods children; the will hangs like a beame vpon the ballance, equally inclining to one
hand

hand as well as to the other: A foggie and a mistie errour contrary to the current of the Scriptures, which teach vs that a regenerate person labours to keepe a good *Conscience in all things, desiring to liue honestly*, as *Heb. 13. verse 18*. That person in whom the worke of grace is wrought, desires and endeouours to bee euermore furnished with the *Panoply*, the compleat armour of God, that so hee may stand fast, resist the Deuill, and bee able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked: The strength and bent of his will and affections are for God and goodnesse; he chuseth holinesse with

Heb. 13. 13

with a full purpose and resolution to walke in it; he turnes from his former evils with a detestation of them, he leaues them with a resolution neuer to take them vp againe. As *Ephraim* said, *Hos. 14. 8.* *What haue I to doe any more with Idols?* So saith he of his old courses and companions, *Away from mee;* and as *Christ* to *Peter*, *Get thee behind me, thou art an offence vnto me, Matth. 16. 23.* He daily prayes, and cries earnestly to God for strength against corruption, and wisheth, *O that my waies were so directed to keep thy Statutes continually! Psal. 119. 5.* He is not for God to day and the deuill to morrow,

morrow, he is no morning Saint, and euening deuill: but desires and endeouours to walke before the Lord in all pleasing, and to serue him in holinesse and righteousness all the dayes of his life. A gracious heart fights against his lusts, he keeps continuall warre with them, the law of his minde is euermore *rebel-ling against the law in his members, Romi. 7. 23.*

Howsoeuer vpon the assault of some furious temptation, some inrode may be made vpon him, he may bee wounded, overthrowne, taken prisoner, and (it may be) a while chained downe by the power of some raging lust, which

which imperiously and cruelly treads and tramples vpon him; yet do he not yeeld and giue himselfe ouer to the power of lust; grace within bestirs it selfe, the heart sighs and groanes, and the Spirit runs to God for helpe and succour, as *Paul* in his temptation, *2 Cor. 12. 8.* He longs to be at liberty, and vseth all meanes of enlargement that may bee. Well then, if the case so standeth, consider with thy selfe, what combate thou doest daily maintaine against thy corruptions. *Doest thou delight in the Law of God, concerning the inner man? as Rom. 7. 22.* though thou seest another law

law in thy members rebelling
against the law of thy minde.

Are thy failings matter of
daily humiliation vnto thy
soule? Dost thou find and
feele that nothing vnder
the Sunne doth more sting
and pierce thy heart than
to be at any time ouertaken
with passions, or carri-
ed away with the swinge
of any corruptions, a-
gainst thy godly purpose
and holy resolutions?

What then, cheere vp thy
drooping spirits; the Lord
by the power of his grace
hath taken possession of
thee: for nothing but grace
is able to keepe the loue of
sin out of the heart, though
peradventure (as was tou-
ched in the beginning)

some

some other thing may for a while keepe it out of thy hand: Ciuilitie and hypocrisie may a little snib sin, or bid it for a while to stand aside and giue way to better things, but it is only grace that strikes this *Goliath dead*, and takes off his head. It is only grace which cures a soule-sicke sinner of those diseases, which by sinne hee. hath contracted vnto himselfe; as only *Jordan*, aboue all other waters, could heale *Naaman of his leprosie*. Now lest any one should bring himselfe into a fooles paradise, and please himselfe with an opinion of his owne goodnesse, because of the abating of some sinne, or the laying

laying downe of some base carriage, which formerly hee had taken vp : let him know that there is a maine difference between the forsaking of sin, in & through the strength of grace, and any other by-respect whatsoever.

Corruption is kept vnder in a gracious heart, meerely in loue to God, and hatred of sinne, as *Hosea* speakes of those that shall bee conuerted vnto God, *They shall feare the Lord and his goodnesse, Hos*

3. 5. Though naturally thou mayest loue this or that sinne more than ordinary, yet grace will helpe thee to abhor and loath it: a better euidence of grace

I cannot

Hose. 3. 5

cannot be, then when the heart is set against its old loue; for it must needs be a supernaturall power, and the worke of grace, which moues any to dislike and loath that euill which naturally he loues. Whereas in the hypocrite sinne is sometime forsaken, because sinne hath left him, he hath no meanes of committing it; or else he forbears sin, as many a fearfull dog doth meat in the platter, because of the whippe or cudgell that is held ouer him: So the hypocrite loues his credit, loues his purse, loues his skin, it may bee; and therefore, lest the committing of some sinne, which hee lingers after, should make

make a flaw, or a hole, or rent in him, hee forbears the committing of it. Examine thy heart therefore in this particular, what mooues thee to forbear thy sin? what is the ground of that diuorce which seemes to be betwixt thee and thine old loue? If any thing in the world but the loue of God and goodnesse, thou art in a bad condition, whatsoeuer is become of thy sinne.

Art thou one whose heart likes well of sinne, though thou canst not, or darest not commit it? Art thou one, who when thou art conuincd of, or reproued for any failings, thy heart riseth against there-

buke, though for thy credit or profit sake thou seemest to welcome, & thankfully to entertaine that reproofe? I tell thee, thou art in a dangerous condition: thou hast but weake and slender euidence of grace, if any at all. For where true grace is, there (howsoever, (as was said before) for a time in a passion or tentation, corruption may preuaile) will be a welcoming of the meanes, and helps that may keepe vs from falling into sin, as appears in *Dauid*, who blessed the Lord and *Abigail*, for the good counsel which she gaue him; there also the heart will bleed, and the tongue will freely against

it selfe acknowledge the
foulennesse of those sins he
hath committed.

Know moreouer, that
the nature of grace is to
strike at all sinne, great and
small, whether more or
lesse profitable & pleasing,
a *Psal.* 119. 104. *There-
fore I hate all the wayes of
falshood.* A gracious heart
hath a constant purpose in
no one thing willingly to
sinne against God. *David*
notes them for vpright that
keepe Gods testimonies,
and seeke him with their
whole heart, and work none
iniquitie, *Psal.* 119. 2, 3.
that is, they liue not in the
willing and ordinary pra-
ctice of any thing which
they know to bee a sinne,

Psal. 119.
104

I 3 whereas

whereas hypocrites though they shew a kind of hatred vnto some sinnes, yet (as hath been sayd) they make no conscience of other some.

Many gracelesse persons will sometimes lay downe a sin, but it shall be to take vp another for gaine and aduantage sake: if they happen to bee freed from the tyranny of some vile affection, they quickly come vnder the power and command of another as bad, if not worse; as many prodigals turne couetous, leauing one vice to take vp another: so that hee is like vnto a bond-slaue bought and sold from one to another, who although he oft change his master

master, yet doth hee not leaue his servile condition. Whereas grace strikes off all bolts and fetters of bondage vnder sin, and works the heart to a deestation of all wickednesse whatsoever.

A gracious heart is set for the glory of God in all things, in all places, at all times : he labours to shun all things displeasing to God, or grievous to his Spirit, makes conscience not onely of open, but secret finnes, not onely of grosse and foule, but of the least evils, not onely murder, but heart-burning or enuie, not only of blasphemy and periury, foule-mouthed sins, but of those

that seeme more faire, as faith and troth, &c. So that as some Physicians haue their *Catholicon* for the purging out of euery peccant humour: so grace is a Catholike expeller and purger of all knowne sins; whereas hypocrites and double-minded men re- presse sinne but in part, and that very partially too; not out of any hatred they beare to sinne, but because of some euill consequent which waits vpon sin. He keepes one sinne or other close, one hole in his heart for some base lust or other, one *Dalila* or darling sinne he hath, from which he will not be diuorced, as if God and men must giue him
him

him leaue in some thing to take hls libertie; he hath one sin which all the world shall not bring him out of loue withall, much lesse to leaue, and to forsake it. But let all such know, that God will none of their patcht holinesse and peece-meale reformation; as good neuer a whit, as neuer the better. All such will one day bee confounded, which haue not a respect vnto all Gods Commandements, *Psa. 119. 6.* as shal be made plaine in the next euidence.

A fourth Euidence of Grace.

A Fourth Euidence of Grace, is obedience vnto the will of God. The

Obedience
to Gods
will.

Ezek. 36.

27.

Lord by his Prophet tells vs, that those which are taken into couenant with him, shall haue his Spirit put into them, and *he will cause them to walk in his Statutes, to keep his Iudgements, and do them.* Hence it is that the Apostle sayes, *Wee are elect through sanctification of the Spirit vnto obedience,* 1 Pet. 1.2. Vnfained obedience vnto the will of God, is the character of a gracious heart, for vntill such time as grace hath seasoned and sanctified the heart, little or no obedience will appeare in the life and conuersation. Heartie obedience doth distinguish a sound heart from an hypocrite. To abound in knowledge,

knowledge, to haue a form of godlineſſe, to bee forward in the outward profeſſion of the truth, and to partake of the Sacraments, make no eſſentiall difference betwixt a gracious & a graceleſſe heart : *To obey from the heart that forme of doctrine which is deliuered*, is a ſure marke to diſtinguiſh the one from the other : *Not the hearers of the Law are iuſt before God, but the doers of the Law ſhall bee iuſtified, Rom. 2. 13.* It is not Lord, Lord, the naked performance of holy duties, which will bring vs vnto heauen; it is obedience, *The doing of the will of my Father* (ſayes Chriſt) *which is in heauen, Matth. 7. 21.* Bee
ye

Rom. 6. 17

ye doers therfore of the Word, not hearers only, deceiuing your selues, Iam. 1.22. All knowledge (as hath beene said before) without obedience, is in Gods esteeme no better than ignorance: He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his Commandements, is a lyer, and the truth is not in him, 1 Iohn 2. 4. Grace teacheth a man to reduce his knowledge into practice: for by the power and strength of grace the will of man is made willing to obey God in all things, so that it will be our meat and drinke to doe the will of our heavenly Father. Here some will bee ready to cry out, and say, that by this doctrine wee destroy

stroy the liberty of mans will, and turne it into a meere necessity. But they speak they know not what. For when wee affirme that by the power of grace mans will becomes willing to obey, this is not to take away or destroy, but rather to rectifie the liberty of our will, which consists not in an vnstable changeablenesse to bend euery way, but in a settled and firme resolution in al things to doe that which God requireth. When the will by the power of grace doth pitch vpon Gods will, adheres vnto it with a resolution not to swarue from it, is the will then compelled, or the libertie thereof violated?

violated? No wise man dares so say, I suppose. When *Dauid* said, *I will keepe thy Statutes*, *Psal.* 119. 8. And againe, *I will delight in thy Word*, vers. 16. And againe, *I haue chosen the way of thy truth*, ver. 30. And againe, *I will run the way of thy Commandements*, when thou shalt enlarge my heart, verse 32. was heere any violence, or compulsion offered vnto *Dauids* will? Or was *Dauids* will moued vnwillingly, when hee intreated the Lord to knit his heart vnto him, that hee might feare his Name? No, no: this desire and holy resolution of *Dauid* proceeded from the truth of grace infused into his heart; after

after which infusion, the will inclines it selfe most willingly and cheerefully, to obey the will of God. Doe wee not pray daily, *Thy will be done on earth as it is in heauen* ? Those heavenly spirits obey willingly, cheerefully, constantly hauing neither will nor power to disobey. How so ? are their wills manacled and fettered ? or is it a wrong vnto them, that they can doe no other ? Surely no, for the power and strength of grace in them, will giue them no leaue to doe otherwise. This obeying and seruing God, is perfect liberty and freedome; and it is the LORD, by the worke of
grace

Iohn 8.36.

grace in our hearts, which must make vs thus free. Now because an hypocrite wanting grace, may goe far in outward obedience, it will be very requisite to lay downe some differences betwixt that obedience which is performed by the powerfull worke of grace, and that which is done vpon outward & by-respects: For you must know that an hypocrite may goe farre in outward obedience. Did not *Cain* offer sacrifice as well as *Abel*? Did not *Ahab* humble himselfe at the hearing of threatnings, as well as *Hezekiah*? in some particulars *Ahab* out-stripped *Hezekiah*, for he rent his cloaths, he fasted, and lay

1 King 21.
27

lay in sack-cloth, which acts of humiliation are not reported of *Hezekiah*. Did not *Iehu* bestir himselfe in fulfilling the commandments of God? Did not *Iudas* preach? Was not *Simon Magnus* baptized? Did not *Ananias* and *Sapphira* sell their possessions, and lay them downe at the Apostles feet, *Act. 5. 1, 2.* And many other instances there may bee brought, to proue how farre hypocrites may wade in outward obedience: therefore outward obedience and conformity is no infallible euidence of true grace. Wherein then lyeth the difference? In these particulars:

First, true grace aymes
at

at the whole will of God,
 it teacheth a man to walke
 in all Gods Commande-
 ments. As it is said of *Za-
 chary and Elizabeth*, Luke
 1. 6. *They walked in all the
 Commandements of God with-
 out reproofe.* Pla. 119. 5, 6.
*O that my waies were directed
 to keepe thy Statutes, then
 should I not bee confounded,
 when I haue respect vnto all
 thy Commandements ! For,*
 he that is bound to one, is
 bound vnto all; *and he that
 offendeth in one, is guiltie of
 all, Iam. 2. 10.* Because our
 obedience stands ingaged
 vnto God as deeply, and
 vpon as strict termes in all,
 as in any of his precepts. If
 thy dealings be vneuen, if
 thy obedience be lame and
 halting;

Iam. 2. 10.

halting; if thou wilt conforme in some things, but not in others; if where pleasure or profit may be had, there thou takest libertie to transgresse, or art so farre at the becke of others, that they may draw thee to the committing of some euill, or if thou be readie to wade no further in obedience to God, than may stand with their good liking, thou art farre from true grace: for this would make their courses regular and vniforme, it would make thee endeuer to bring thy will, to Gods will, and heartily to submit to euey duty hee commands thee, not caring who bee offended, so God be honoured
and

and pleased by thine obedience whereas counterfeit grace picks & culls out here and there, such precepts as stand with ease or profit. It will boast with *Saul*, and say, *I haue fulfilled all the Commandements of God*; yet *Agag* must flue, and the fat-
test of the cattell must be spared: Whereupon *Samuel* told him that hee had not obeyed the voyce of the Lord, *1 Sam. 15. 19.* For to say truth, hee that wilfully and of purpose breakes any one of Gods Lawes, cannot bee said to keepe any of them, because hee keepes them not of conscience; for if hee made conscience of one, he would make conscience
of

of all. If *Iehu* his obedience and zeale had beene found, it would haue beene manifested in the pulling downe of *Ieroboams* calves, as well as *Ahabs Baal*; but his suffering of the one discovered his obedience and zeale to beevnsound, and counterfeit in the other.

Againe, a gracious heart labors to obey at all times, in all places, and in all company. Hee will not for feare or flattery go against Gods precepts. It is not profit, or pleasure, that shall draw him vnto euill, for he resolues and labours to doe righteousnesse at all times, *Psalms. 106.3.* Gods Commandements are not grieuous, but delightfull vnto

2

Psa. 106.3.

vnto him : and therefore
as it is said of *Hezekiah*,
2 King. 18. 6. He cleaues to
the Commandements of God,
and departeth not from them.
Whereas the obedience of
the hypocrite is like vnto
Ephraims, Hosea 7. 8. As a
cake on the hearth not tur-
ned, halfe baked, His good-
nes is as the morning dew,
quickly dried vp; for he
sets not his delight on the
Almighty, *Iob 27. 10.* nei-
ther seeketh hee to God at
all times.

Obiect.

But doe not the best of
Gods children sometimes
halt in their obedience?

Answ.

Yes, for in many things
we sin all, *Iam. 3. 2.* Grace is
but imperfect in the best
of Gods children, and cor-
ruption

ruption in the vnregenerate part, keeps downe too often, and hinders the work of grace : not that corruption is of it selfe stronger than grace, if God will put to his strength : for this were to make God weaker than man, and the flesh stronger than the spirit; but because if God at any time leaue vs to our selues, or neuer so little withdraws the power of his Spirit, we are more inclined to follow the sinfull motions of our corrupt flesh, than the holy and gracious inclinations of the Spirit of God : For if *Adam* in his innocencie, when he knew no euill, being left but a while vnto himselfe, and wanting

ting the efficacious presence and assistance of G O D s grace, was so quickly, so easily drawne to sin; much more the corrupted children of sintull parents, who are but in part sanctified, and haue too much affinity with sin, are easily brought to disobey God, if he help vs not with his Spirit against the motions of sinne, and backe vs against all tentations and prouocations to disobedience. For you must know that God is not alwayes alike present with his children, but in great wisdom withdraws from them sometimes that effectuall presence of his grace, which at other times he affords them, and that for

for these and some other causes.

First of all, to shew vs our owne instabilitie and weakenesse, how vnable we are of our selues to stand any longer than we are vp-held of him. If hee takes from vs his Spirit, as sometimes he tooke the wheelles from *Pharaohs* chariots, downe we fall presently. How quickly did *Peter* fall, being left vnto himselfe?

Secondly, the Lord doth this, to humble and abase vs, to cut our combes, and to coole our courage, who are ready to thinke too iollily of our selues, and to lift vp our selues aboue our brethren, as *Peter* did, who tells Christ that he would

K sticke

Iticke fast vnto him, though the rest of the Apostles should flinch, and fall off from him; but they stand, when he falls to his greater shame and deeper humiliation.

3

Thirdly, the Lord doth this to make vs the more watchfull ouer our selues: that we be not too bold or secure, and so through self-confidence and carnall presumption rush vpon occasions, and tentations vnto euill, as *Peter* did, who would needs aduenture into the High Priests Hall, in confidence of his owne strength, where (being left vnto himselfe) he fell most shamefully and foully, aboue the rest of the Apostles,

stles, who durst not be so
foole-hardy, as to plunge
themselues into danger,
when they might keepe
out.

Fourthly, the Lord doth
this to bring them closer
vnto him, by continuall and
earnest prayer for the assi-
stance of his grace, that hee
would stand by them, that
hee would not leaue them
nor forsake them. The child
when it hath caught a fall,
through selfe-confidence,
or letting goe its hold of
the mother, oh how it will
cling to the mother, how
fast it will gripe her finger,
lest being left vnto it selfe,
it fall againe!

Fifthly, the Lord doth
this, to worke in vs a ten-

K 2 der.

4

5

Kalaphi-
sere.

der-heartednesse, and compassionate feeling of our brothers frailtie and weaknesse, that we doe not beare our heads too highly ouer him, looke too bigly vpon him, if his foot hath slipped, and hee by occasion hath fallen into a sinne; but that we labour to restore him, or set him in againe (as the word imports, *Gal. 6.1.*) *with the Spirit of meekenesse*, considering our selues, being of the same metall and making; who either haue or may in the like manner be tempted as our brother hath beene.

6

Sixthly and lastly, that so we may loue the Lord the more for restoring of vs, and lifting vs vp when we

we were fallen. Now the childe of God being for these or some such like other causes left vnto himselfe, and wanting the assistance of grace, to bring him well off from the temptation into which he was fallen, listens to Satans charme, stoops to his lure, vntill such time as the Lord who hath formerly laid earnest for him, returnes againe with the gracious and powerfull presence of his Spirit, vindicates his owne right, curbs and subdues the mutinous and rebellious lusts of the flesh, sets grace in its seat againe to direct and gouerne the whole man: and so the will and affections set in tune,

3

Rom. 6. 17

the childe of God falls againe to his former course of obedience.

Thirdly, a gracious heart obeyeth willingly and cheerfully, he yeelds a hartie obedience, *Rom. 6. 17. Ye haue obeyed from the heart. Hee loues the Lord with all his heart, with all his soule, with all his strength, as Luk. 10. 27.* There may be an vniuersall obedience (I meane in outward shew and appearance) and yet not a hearty and cheerefull obedience. A seruant may goe thorow-stitch with his worke, and do all his taske, and yet shucke and grumble, and wish his worke were lesse, or of some other kinde, or at some other

ther time appointed him.
So hypocrites may obey,
but it is no heartie and
cheerefull obedience, but a
halting and vnwilling wil-
lingnesse, if they could tell
which way to saue their
credit, to cōpasse their ends,
and come fairely off, they
would leaue off to obey.
Whereas a gracious heart
performes duties *not by*
constraint, but willingly, and
of a readie minde, 1 Pet. 5. 2.
He yeelds himselfe as a ser-
uant to obey, Rom. 6. 16.
Whatsoever good seruants
doe, they doe (or at least
should doe) it cheerefully,
Coloss. 3. 13. without any
mumbling or wording, or
reasoning the case with
their master, which cheere-

1 Pet. 5. 2.

Pro. 23. 26

fulnesse and willingnesse makes the worke accepted, though there be many failings, 2 Cor. 8. 12. *If a willing minde, it is accepted according to that a man hath, &c.* Therefore seeing the Lord calls for the heart, *Pro. 23. 26.* and measures all obedience by the heart, *For with God the minde is the man;* and it is not the outward action, but the inward intention of the heart which the Lord lookes vpon, let vs learne to deny our selues, and whatsoeuer we doe, to doe it heartily; though troubles and crosses doe attend our obedience, to the vtmost of our power let vs endeavour to bring forth

forth fruit with patience.

A fourth difference lies in sinceritie and singlenesse of heart. A good man obeyes for conscience sake, without any respect of any carnall and earthly ends, as *Dauid* exhorted his son, *1 Chron. 28. 9. Salomon, know thou the God of thy Fathers, and serue him with a perfect heart and willing minde.* It is said of *Dauid*, *1 King 3. 6. He walked before the Lord in truth and vprightnesse.* Every one that obeyes willingly and cheerefully, obeyes not sincerely. *Iehu* was forward enough in fulfilling the command of God, and rooting our *Ahabs* posteritie, but he aymed more

1 Chron. 28. 9.

1 Kin. 3. 6

at the setting the crowne vpon his owne head, and making sure worke for his posterity after him; than the obeying of Gods word. Whereas a gracious heart hath his conuersation in simplicitie; not subtilty; in godly purenesse, not dissembled and counterfeited sanctity, or fleshly wisdom. Hee walkes not in craftinesse, but approues himselfe *to every mans conscience in the sight of God,* 2 Cor. 4.2. Therefore to conclude this point, as we desire any sound euidence to our owne hearts of true grace, let our life be a life of obedience; and that we may not be losers in the end by all our obedience, but

2 Cor. 4.2.

but gainers: looke (I beseech you) that your obedience bee rightly qualified; let it be an intire and perfect obedience, make conscience of all good duties, and that at all times, and in all places; Beware of displeasing God, to please man; Beware of culling out here and there some good duties to serue thy turne withall: there must be no parting of stakes betwixt God and the diuell, betwixt CHRIST and the world. A peece-meale obedience, is in Gods esteeme no better, no other than disobedience, as appeares in *Sauls* killing the *Amalekites*, and sparing *Agar*, and some of the cattle. To reforme
some

some things, nay, to conforme in many things, and not in all, is no conformitie at all, but deformitie. What auailles it a man to bee a Saint abroad, and a deuill at home? To frequent the assembly of Saints, and to fashion himselfe to the world? To be strict in the duties of religion, and loose in the workes of moralitie and outward righteousness? Or to walke in a tracke of ciuility, and to neglect, if not abandon the way of pietie? As if holinesse and righteousness were two enemies, and could not accord and agree together! Againe, that which thou dost, do with all thy might; and (to make all good) last
of

of all cast in the salt of sincerity to season all thy doings: doe nothing to bee seene of men, for then thou lovest thy reward with God, who loueth truth in the inward affections, *Psal.* 51.6. and passeth by all outward failings, where the heart is vpright before him; sincerity being a grace which makes all obedience saueur well to the Lords palat.

Therefore that thou mayest be drawne to such a kinde of obedience, consider of these motiues:

First, know that vntill thou findest thy heart inclined, and thy will framed to this obedience, which I haue formerly spoken of,

Motiues
vnto
sound obedience.

I

Ioh 15. 14

of, thou art no friend of Christs; *Yee are my friends* (saith Christ) *if ye do whatsoever I command you.* Many can bee content to receiue good by Christ, and to account him their Iesus; but few returne loue and duty vnto Christ, by acknowledging him their Lord, in keeping his Word, obeying his wil, and doing whatsoever hee commandeth them.

2

Secondly, thou wantest (as hath beene formerly proued) sound evidence of thy regeneration; for whom God reneweth, he sanctifieth throughout; he fills him with the seeds of righteousness, so as his life is fruitfull in obedience.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, the richer thou art in obedience, the more bountifull will the Lord be in rewarding. He that gained five talents, had the rule ouer five Cities: *For euery one shall receiue according to his worke, Rom. 2. 6.*

3

Fourthly and lastly, this will procure (as you shall heare by and by) outward prosperitie; it will fetch in a rich portion of outward benefits and blessings, *Esay 1. 19. If yee be willing, and obey, yee shall eat the good things of the Land.*

4

Now then, to draw to a conclusion of this point; seeing you haue heard of these euidences of true grace; let me in the bowels of the Lord Iesus beseech you

you my brethren, to goe home to your owne hearts, make there a diligent scrutiny and narrow search, whether you finde these evidences in your possession, or not. Are the eyes of your vnderstanding enlighthned with saving knowledge? Is thy knowledge rightly qualified? Is it practicall, or is it meerely theoricall? is it a transforming knowledge moulding thee to the Word? Is it such a knowledge as vents it selfe continually for the glory of God, and the good of others? Dost thou find thy heart, by beleeuing, knit vnto God through Christ, louing him, and fearing him for his

his owne sake, as well as
for his Christs sake? Dost
thou find the throat of thy
corruption cut in thee, and
thy sins bleeding to death,
and gasping in thee? Is thy
heart set against euery euill
way, and thy soule delight-
ed in the practice of that
which is good? doth thy
heart stoope to **G O D S**
Word, and thou yeeld vp
thy selfe to be at his com-
mand, and that willingly,
cheerefully, and in single-
nes of heart fearing God?
Then blessed be the time
that euer thou wert made
acquainted with these high
prerogatiues; God hath
done more for thee, than if
(wanting these) he had put
vpon thee all the honour,
pompe,

pompe, and glory of the world. But woe and alas, how few are there in whom these evidences are to bee found! Oh that such as want them, had but eyes to see their misery, and hearts to consider how full of vn-conceiueable horror their consciences will one day be, when they come to be awakened, and perceiue how they haue trifled away the day of grace, turned the grace of God into wantonnesse, receiued the grace of God in vaine, so as they haue no part in the inheritance either of grace, or of glory! Know and belecue (deare brethren) that things will not alwayes stand at this stay with you. A day
is

is comming, wherein yee must lay down these earthly tabernacles of yours, and with them all your pleasures, profits and honours, when none of all these will stand you in any stead, or afford you any comfort, but will rather (wanting grace to use them aright) increase your griefe and sorrow. A day will come, wherein (if these evidences be not in thee) thy conscience will not spare to tell thee to thy face, that (wanting grace) thou art a vessel of wrath, ordained and prepared for destruction. Oh the troubles, sorrowes and feares, into which (in that day) thy poore soule will be plunged for want of
of

of grace ! On what wouldest thou not then giue for one dram of grace ? How happy wouldest thou take thy selfe to be, if thou hadst but a little time to redeeme, wherein thou mightest come to partake of the meanes of grace, which formerly thou hast slighted ouer, making no more account of them than of thine old shooes ? Thou wilt then cease to wonder at Gods faithfull Ministers so inueighing against the neglect of grace, and so vehemently pressing and vrging the necessitie thereof. Thou wilt then say, that a little grace were more worth than all the world beside, and that they are onely

only happy that doe partake of it. Whereas the childe of God hauing tasted of Gods goodnesse, and made partaker of his grace, is filled with vnconceiueable ioy and comfort, finding himselfe deliuered from the power of darknesse, and translated into the Kingdome of Iesus Christ. His conscience being purged from dead workes by the bloud of Christ, and his heart purified by faith, he can looke death in the face, take him by the hand, and bid him welcome; he can lye down and rest in peace, and in full assurance (or if any doubtings through Satans malice doe arise, in hope) of eternal

eternall life through Iesus Christ. And this shall suffice to haue spoken of the euidences of true grace. I now come (according to the method and order which in the beginning I propounded) to lay downe some grounds and reasons, *Why Grace is the best thing we can partake of.*

The first
reason.

First, because it is the onely thing which giues content to the heart and minde of a Christian, in euery estate and condition whatsoever God hath placed him. Contentment is the thing which euery one aymes at, and desires in all his courses. Why doe men toile and moile in the world earely and
late,

late, thorow thicke and
thinne, but to satisfie
their mindes in these out-
ward riches? Why doe
people follow, and with
vnwearied and vnlimited
desires and affections, hunt
after the honors and plea-
sures of this world, but to
satisfie their desires, and (as
they suppose) to giue them-
selues content? But this is
a meere imposture of our
wicked heart, falsly think-
ing that our desires are
satisfied with desiring,
when as (the truth is) they
are increased. Why doe
men and women decke and
adorne (as they thinke,
whereas indeed they de-
forme) their bodies with
strange attire, with costly
orna-

Esa. 55.2.

ornaments, but to give themselves content, and to please their mindes? For if you aske them a reason of their practice, they will tell you it is their pleasure so to doe. But they deceive themselves, in looking for content in worldly things, or to bee satisfied with them, as appeares *Esa. 55.2.* *Wherefore doe you spend money for that which is not bread? and labour for that which satisfieth not?* Is it possible that vanitie, and vexation of spirit, should give content to the heart of man? All things vnder the Sunne are no better, no other than vanity, if wee will belecue the Preacher, *Eccles. 1.14.* Onely grace
is

is that liuing water, or wa-
ter of life, *of which whosoe-
uer drinkes, shall neuer thirst,*
Iohn 4.14.

Ioh.4.14.

Grace teacheth vs in
euery estate and condition
to bee content, *Phil. 4. 11.*
We can be abased, and we
can abound, we can be full,
and wee can bee hungry;
Gods grace is enough and
sufficient for vs, able to sup-
ply all defects, and to fulfill
all our necessities. But if
grace be absent, the minde
is full of blindnesse, the
heart is fraught with wic-
kednesse, and the consci-
ence perplexed with guil-
tinesse; the flesh, the world,
and the Diuell doe there
lord it; and what content
or rest can there be, where
L such

Phil.4.11.

such lords of mis-rule doe rule and beare sway? It is grace which repaires Gods Image in the soule of a Christian; now the more like we are to God in holinesse, and righteousness, the more will the heart bee satisfied, and contented through the apprehension of the loue of God. *I will behold thy face in righteousness, and when I awake I shall be satisfied with thine Image, Psal. 17. 15.* Let a man haue all the riches, and honours which the world can afford him, yet vntill grace bee wrought in him, vntill the Image of God be renewed in him, hee will haue a restless and vnquiet heart, *There is no peace,*

peace, saith God, *unto the wicked, Esay 57. 21.* What content or rest can that man haue which is vnder the wrath and displeasure of the Lord? vntill grace bee infused we are enemies vnto God, and he an enemy vnto vs, *Col. 1. 21.* But grace assures vs that we are reconciled vnto God, and that we haue his loue which giueth more content to the heart, and filleth it with more ioy, than the riches and abundance of the world can, *Psal. 4. 6, 7.*

But doth euery gracious heart finde, and feele this contentment and ioy you speake of?

Object.

Not alwayes for oft time through Satans malice,

Answ.

lice and subtiltie, it comes to passe that the childe of God in time of tentation is much perplexed, so as there is no rest within him, hee is tumbled and tossed vp and downe with feares and cares; he will question the truth of Gods promise, belie the worke of the Spirit, and say there is no grace in him. He will tell you that all his former forwardnesse and profession, hath beene hypocriticall and counterfeit; and that his ioy and reioycing in the Lord was but Satanicall illusion, or vaine confidence. But grace will one day blow ouer this blacke cloud, for *light is sowne for the righteous, and ioy for the vpright in heart,*

heart, *Psalme 97. 11.*

Againe, it is through the strength and power of grace that wee are able to hold vp our heads in any storme of trouble and affliction; that wee are not swallowed vp of tentations, that we are not in distresse, when we are afflicted; that in pouertie, wee are not overcome of pouertie, and that we perish not when we are cast downe: we are able to doe all things through the helpe of Christ which strengthens vs, *Phil. 4. 13.* Many a deare childe of God, in the agony of his soule, through the heat and pressure of some hot and heauie affliction, is ready to cry out, Neuer man trou-

The second Reason.

Phil. 4. 13.

Lam. 1. 12

1 Cor. 10.

13.

Esa. 40. 31

bled and crossed as I am !
 complaining as the Church,
*Lam. 1. 12. Behold and see, if
 there be any sorrow like unto
 my sorrow which is done unto
 mee : thus is hee ready to
 sinke vnder his burden,
 were he not supported by
 the grace of God, who be-
 ing faithfull, will not suffer
 his to be tempted aboue that
 which they are able to beare,
 but will giue the issue with
 the temptation, that they may
 be able to beare it, 1 Cor. 10.
 13. Though weake and
 weary of themselves, yet
 the Lord will renue their
 strength, they shall lift vp
 their wings as the Eagles :
 they shall run and not be wea-
 ry, and they shall walke, and
 not be faint, Esay 40. 31.*

Grace

Grace vpholds them in, and carrieth them thorow euery triall and affliction whatsoeuer. In wrongs and iniuries it makes a man to sit downe without reuenge: in afflictions, to lay his hand vpon his mouth, and not repine, or murmur, but to be as a man dumbe: in euery paine to apply some plaster for ease and comfort. Through the strength of grace, the soundnesse of the heart supports the weaknesse of the body; so that when the outward man fainteth and faileth, the inward is renewed more and more.

Thirdly, it is grace which (as hath been sufficiently proued before) teacheth

The third
Reason.

cheth and helpeth a man to liue godly, and to walke in the wayes of godlinesse, which in regard of the manifold lets and discouragements within vs, and without vs (without grace) can neuer be effected. The way of vertue is very hard, in regard of our manifold weaknesse, wanting strength to wade thorow the difficulties, and passe ouer the rubs which lye in a Christians race: weakenesse of iudgement and vnderstanding in the duties of piety, rightly to discerne which coast the right way bendeth: weakenesse of will and affection to take the right way, when it is prescribed vnto vs: weaknesse
of

of ability to moue one foot forward in the way, much lesse able to encounter with those difficulties, which (through the allurements of the world, and the subtiltie of that old Serpent, and rage and malice of the Dragon) will be laid before vs: and last of all, weaknesse in regard of perseuerance, and continuall progresse in our iourney. When it falls out, that many proue idle loyterers, which not only make many baits and pauses in their way, but at last fall short, and take vp their rest before they come to their iourneyes end: Against all which weakneses, it is only grace that affords a Chri-

Ier. 32. 40

stian strength, and enables him to continue to the end; as appeares, *Ierem. 32. 40.* and *Ezek. 36. 27.* and to runne with patience the race that is set before vs, *Heb. 12. 1.*

The
fourth
Reason.

1 Tim. 4. 8

Fourthly, Grace brings in outward and temporall benefits: the surest and the speediest way to get goods, is, to get goodnesse. For, *Godlinesse hath the promise of this, and of another life, 1 Tim. 4. 8.* When the children of Israel had professed their obedience to the Lord, *Deut. 5. 29.* the Lord replies to *Moses*, *O that there were in them such hearts to keep my Commandments alwayes, that it might goe well with them: not only*
in

Deut. 5. 29

in respect of their soules,
but their bodies also; as
Moses told them afterward,
Deut. 28. 1. If thou diligently
obey the voyce of the Lord,
and obserue and doe all his
Commandements: Then as
it followeth, *Thou shalt bee*
blessed in the Citie, blessed in
the field, &c. So Esay 1. 19.
If yee consent and obey, yee
shall eat the good things of
the Land. Grace paues a
way to outward prosperi-
tie. Hence *Prou. 3. 16, 17.*
it is said of *Wisdom*, *That*
length of dayes are in her
light hand, and in her left
riches and glory, her wayes
are the wayes of pleasure, and
all her pathes prosperitie:
What else was implied by
that speech of our *Sauour,*
Matth.

Pro 3. 16
17.

Matth. 6. 33. First seeke the kingdome of God and his righteousnesse, and all these things shall be ministred vnto you. Outward blessings attend vpon grace as its appurtenances; get grace, and be sure of these. This may seeme a paradox to many, and ordinary experience (some will say) teacheth vs the contrary.

Obiect.

For, first of all, doe we not oft see, that pietie and pouertie goe hand in hand, that many gracious people abounding in goodnesse, haue but a poore pittance of outward goods? And on the other side, is there not many a diuell incarnate that is clad in purple and scarlet, fares deliciously
euery

every day, and hath more than enough? Loe (sayes David, Psal. 73. 12.) these are the wicked, they prosper and increase in riches.

Psa. 72. 12

Ans.

For answer to both these Obiections, know first, that the promise of temporall good things is but conditionall; when they are expedient for vs, when they may be furtherances, and not coolers of grace in his children. The Lord doth all things by weight and measure; all his workes are done in wisdome and righteousnesse. It may be the Lord sees that riches beginne to steale away the hearts of his children, and therefore he will withdraw riches from them; for the
Lord

Lord is a iealous God: if once he beginne to see vs dote vpon, or to delight in the things of this world more than in him, he will cut vs short of them, as he dealt with *Ionas*, who tooke too much content in his Gourd, and therefore the *Lord smites it, that it withered, Ionas 4.17.* Or it may bee, the Lord withdrawes outward benefits, that so wee may see their vanitie, how changeable and flitting they are, and therefore will haue vs to minde riches more durable, and labour for *the food that perisheth not, and for the bag that will neuer wax old, Luk. 12.*

33. Or else the Lord takes from vs temporall riches,

Luk. 11.
33.

to bestow vpon vs spiritu-
all good things, which he
sees will not thriue nor
prosper, where the other
are. Or it may be he sees
we are not able to manage
outward riches, but would
do some harme with them,
grow proud, contentious,
and quarrellsome, or fall to
some excesse and intempe-
rance by them; and there-
fore as wee deale with a
child who had a staffe or
a sword in his hand, take it
from him lest he hurt him-
selfe, or some other with
it: so deales the Lord with
his children. Or if none
of all these, it may be the
Lord takes away these
outward benefits, sets fire
vpon the hedge which is
about

Iob 1.21.

about his children, to make knowne the truth of grace in them, that the Deuill and all the world may see and know, their seruice to God is not mercenary, but that they can loue, and feare, and obey him as well in the want, as in the plentie of these outward things; yea, and blesse God, taking from them as well as giuing vn-
to them, *Iob 1.21.* For (as you heard) grace fits their mindes to their estate, so as they can be empty as well as abound; therefore that little which they haue, being sanctified and seasoned with grace, *is better than great riches to the wicked, Psal. 37.16.*

Againe, whereas you
object

object that many wicked and gracelesse people haue a greater portion of these outward things than Gods deare children; It is not that *God regardeth the rich more than the poore*, *Iob 34. 19.* but deales with them, as it is said King *Entraples* did with his enemies whom he most hated; heaps most riches vpon them, thereby to plunge them into tentations and snares; to fill them with many foolish and noysome lusts, *that so they may pierce themselves thorow with many sorrowes*, *1 Tim. 6. 9, 10.* God oft-times giues honours and riches to the wicked in his wrath, as he gaue Quailes to the Israelites, so that *their table is a snare*

Iob 34. 19.

1 Tim. 6. 9, 10.

Psa. 69. 22.

snare before them, and their prosperitie their ruine, Psal. 69. 22. Griue not therefore at the seeming happinesse and prosperitie of gracelesse persons, for whatsoeuer they haue; they hold in a wrong tenure, they haue it with a curse, and they must bee called to after-reckonings for it. Only grace sanctifies things present, and paues a way for future benefits. If there were no more arguments to proue the worth of grace, me thinkes this should enhance the esteeme thereof, euen amongst worldlings. Would they bee rich? Would they haue possessions behinde them to their posterity? I know no better

ter way than grace. *I have
beene young, and am old : yet
saw I neuer the righteous for-
saken, nor his seed begging
bread, Psal. 37. 25. Blessed is
the man that feareth the
Lord, and delighteth greatly
in his Commandements. His
seed shall bee mightie vpon
earth : the generation of the
righteous shall bee blessed,
Psa. 112. 1, 2. and what fol-
lowes after in the third
verse? Riches and treasures
shall be in his house.*

Psal. 37. 25

*Psal. 112.
1, 2, 3.*

Fifthly, it is only grace
which makes vp Decayes
and defects in Nature,
which all the things in the
world cannot doe. Art
may helpe Nature, and in
some particulars perfect
Nature, but it is only grace
which

*The fifth
Reason.*

which makes vp the breaches and decayes thereof. When a man hath liued to that age and fulnesse of dayes, that his head and armes doe dodder through weaknesse, his knees and thighes doe buckle vnder him, as vnable to support his vnwielderly body: when age and time haue worne out the edge and backe of his senses, so that his eyes wax dimme, as did *Isaac's*, hee hath no more taste in his meat and drinke than had *Barzillai*, and hee can no more distinguish the voyce of singing or any melodie, if grace be in the heart, notwithstanding all these decayes in Nature, he flourisheth in his age, *Psal.*

92. 12. *The righteous shall flourish like a Palme-tree, and shall grow like a Cedar in Lebanon, verse 14. They shall still bring forth fruit in their age, they shall be fat and flourishing. The righteous will hold his way, and hee whose hands are pure, shall increase his strength, Job 17. 9. not of nature, but of grace, which supplies the defects of nature.*

Psa. 92. 12.

Job 17. 9.

He hath his eyes of faith, to see the excellencie of a holy life, to see the happinesse of his estate. He hath the hands of faith, to claspe about the promises, to take Christ into his heart, as *Si- meon took him into his armes.* He hath eares open, or if Nature hath played her part

part in them, and they can receiue no more; he hath an heart open, to heare what the Lord shall speake to his soule by his Holy Spirit. His taste is fresh and liuely, he findes sweetnesse in the holy ordinances of God, more than in the riches, pleasures, and delicates of the whole world. Nay which is more, though his grinders cease, and the doores bee shut without by *the base sound of the grindings*, as Eccles. 12. 3, 4. he can heartily feed vpon the body and bloud of the Lord Iesus Christ; and when *they wax darke that looke out by the windows*, verse 3. hee can (without going vp to *Pisgah*,

gab, as *Moses* did) behold the Land of Canaan; nay, more than so, he can looke Death in the face, long for him, as for a treasure, and desire to lay downe his earthly tabernacle, *and bee with the Lord Christ*. Tell me then if all the art, riches or pompe of the world is able to doe thus much; no, no, it is the onely prerogative and priuiledge of grace, to supply these naturall wants.

Sixthly, it is onely grace that giues vs a sanctified vse of all those things wee doe partake of; for whatsoever it bee that any one doth enioy and possesse, if he be a gracelesse person; all these things (good in them-

The sixth Reason.

1 Tim. 4. 5

themselves) will proue curses and snares vnto him, and such as will further his condemnation in the day of Iudgement. It is Grace which must sanctifie all parts of Nature, all endowments and gifts of body and minde: The strength of *Goliath*, the valour of *Ioab*, the beautie of *Absalom*, the wisdom of *Achitophel*, the eloquence of *Herod*, the honour and promotion of *Haman*, and the riches of *Dives*; all these were but snares, thornes, and curses to the possessours of them, for want of grace to qualifie, to sanctifie them.

The se-
uenth
Reason.

Seuenthly and lastly, herein appeares the excellencie of grace, in that
it

it paues the way, and bringeth vs vnto glory. Grace is the first fruits of glory, and as it were the earnest of our eternall inheritance: for all the gifts of grace bestowed vpon vs here, do tend and make for the fitting, and preparing of vs for glory hereafter. Grace neuer finally or totally forsakes a man, but brings him at last to that eternall inheritance, lands him in the end in heauen, his desired haven. There be many things of good vse and worth, which are no lasting things; there be many things both delightfull and precious, but yet fading; onely grace herein hath its precedencie and excel-

M lencie

Παλις
 vs. 12, so
 taken.
 Titus 3.5.

lencie aboue all earthly things, it neuer wholly leaues vs, but prepares vs and brings vs vnto glorie. Grace is heauen vpon earth: and therefore they which follow Christ in the regeneration, *shall sit in the throne of glory, Mat. 19.28.*

Grace prepares vs for glory two manner of wayes:

First, by remouing those euils which may hinder vs.

And secondly, by enabling of vs to practise those good things which may further vs. *The grace of God which bringeth salvation vnto all men, hath appeared, and teacheth vs that we should*

should deny vngodlinesse and worldly lusts, and that wee should liue soberly, and righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for the blessed hope, &c. Tit. 2. 11, 12, 13. Whether you vnderstand here by grace, the Word of grace, as some doe, or the free grace of God, as others take it, I am sure it is true also of the grace of sanctification; for this helpeth vs to eschew euill, and to choose, and cleaue to that which is good. As it is in the lightning of any darke place, darknesse giues way, when light approacheth; so when grace commeth into the soule, away (in part) goes darknesse and blindnesse of

Act. 16. 18

minde, ignorance, impie-
tie, prophanenesse, &c. *Paul*
telleth vs that he was sent
to preach vnto the Gen-
tiles, *To turne them from*
darknesse to light and from
the power of Satan vnto God.
Such as liue in darknesse,
vnder the power of any
one sinne, those know not
what the powerfull pre-
sence of grace meaneth.
Grace pulls downe sinne,
and sets vp righteousness,
Rom. 5. 21. Grace raignes
by righteousness. It holds
vp the Scepter of Christ
within vs, helps vs to be
holy in all manner of con-
uersation; and so hauing
our *fruit in holinesse*, wee
come in the end to euerlasting
life, *Rom. 6. 22.* O the ex-
cellencie

cellencie of grace, that it thus brings vs to glory !

Let this comfort vs against that comfortlesse doctrine of falling away from grace. Consider wee from whom grace proceeds, euen from God the Father; and will not God perfect the worke of his owne hands ?

I am perswaded that he that hath begun this good worke in you, will performe it untill the day of Iesus Christ, Phil.

1.6. The gifts of God are without repentance, Rom. 11.

29. The righteous shall neuer bee moued, but had in euerlasting remembrance, Psal. 112. 6.

But wee are weake and feeble, we haue strong corruptions within vs, and

Obiect.

M 3 mighty

mighty and subtile tentations without vs, and therefore like to fall away.

Answ.

True, if there were not an higher power, and a stronger arme than our owne to support vs. Our helpe standeth in the name of the Lord. We are strong in the power of his might, *For it is God which stablisheth vs in Christ, and hath annointed vs, 2 Cor. 1.21.* Our stabilitie is deriued from God the Father, the Sonne, and the Holy Ghost.

The grounds of our stabilitie which we fetch from God, are these:

I

First, the promises of God, *Ier. 24. 7. I will giue them an heart to know mee, that*

that I am the Lord, and they shall be my people, and I will be their God. So Ier. 32. 40. I will put my feare into their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. Now to say that these are generall promises made vnto the whole Church, and therefore not to be appropriated to particular persons, will be but a silly euasion. For doth not the whole consist of particular members? And doe not we finde in Scripture, promises made to particular persons generally applyed, and likewise generall promises particularly applyed? The Lord made a particular promise vnto *Iosua 1. 9. I will not faile thee, nor forsake thee.*

M 4 Which

Which promise *S. Paul* *Hebr. 13. 5.* applyes generally. Other instances there be.

2

Secondly, we proue it from the attributes of God; his power, his faithfulnessse and constancie. If any of those whom the Lord hath effectually called, should vtterly fall from grace and perish, it must needs follow, that God wants either power to saue those whom hee would, or else wants faithfulnessse to saue as hee hath promised; either of which wants, the deuils themselves dare not a- uouch to be in God.

Concerning his power, the Lord himselfe tells vs, *Esay 43. 13. I will doe it, and who*

who shall let? Again, Esa. 46.

Esa. 43. 13

10. My counsell shall stand,
and I will doe whatsoeuer I

Esa. 46. 10

will. Christ also tels vs,
Ioh. 10. My Father which
gaue them me, is greater than
all, and none is able to take
them out of my Fathers hand.

Ioh. 10. 29

For, sayes Peter, we are kept
by the power of God through
faith vnto saluation, 1 Pet.

1. 5.

And for his faithfulness,
that Wizard Balaam
could say, Numb. 23. 19.
God is not as man, that hee
should lie, neither as the son
of man, that he should repent:
hath he said it, and shall he
not doe it? and hath he spo-
ken, and shall he not accom-
plish it? Yes surely, for the
Lord is faithfull which will

Numb. 23.
19.

M 5. stablish

stablish you, and keepe you from euill, 2 Thess. 3. 3.

The Lord purposing to frame vnto himselfe a Church, against which the gates of hell should neuer be able to preuaile, thought it fit to lay the foundation of it deepe and strong, euen in himselfe, his owne purpose. Things many times decay and perish for want of a firme and good foundation. *But the foundation of God (saith Paul) remaineth sure, 2 Tim. 2. 19.* So that vntill such time as God doth alter his purpose, which shall neuer be, for as *Malac. 3. 6. I am the Lord, I change not: Gods children are sure to perseuere in his grace: For whom hee once loues,*

2 Tim. 2.

Mal. 3. 9.

loues, to the end bee loueth them, *Ioh. 13. 1.*

Secondly, assurance of perseuerance in the grace of God, may be gathered from many things in the Sonne:

First, from his al-sufficiencie, *Hebr. 7. 25.* Hee is able perfectly to saue all those that come to God by him. *Iude 24.* To him that is able to keepe you that you fall not, and to present you faultlesse, &c. As he is able, so is hee willing, *Ioh. 6. 37* and *40.*

Heb. 7. 25

Iude 24

Secondly, from the vertue of his passion and sufferings, *Hebr. 10. 14.* For with one offering hath he consecrated for euer them that are sanctified.

Heb. 10.

14.

Thirdly, from the efficacy,

Ioh. 17. 15

cacie of his prayer, which God alwaies heares. Christ prayed for all beleeuers, *Ioh. 17.* first, that *the Lord would keepe them from enill,* vers. 15. and secondly, *That they may bee one with him,* vers. 21. and thirdly, *That they may be with him, and behold his glory,* versc 24.

Heb. 7. 25

And this prayer the Lord Christ our Aduocate still continues, though not in a vocall manner, *seeing hee euer liueth to make intercession for vs,* Heb. 7. 25. These things considered, it is as possible to plucke Christ out of his kingdome, as to rent the poorest beleeuers from him, once made a true and liuely member of his mysticall body.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, wee proue it from the nature and office of the Spirit, which is to seale vp, and make sure the inheritance of Gods chosen. All that partake of the couenant of grace, are sealed with the holy Spirit of promise, *Ephes. 1. 13.* which sealing is not for a day, a moneth, or a yeare, but for euer, *unto the day of redemption, Ephes. 4. 30.* The nature of a Seale (all know) is to make things sure. The decree of the Medes and Persians, that it might bee irreuocable, was sealed with the Kings seale, *Dan. 6. 8.* Left the Disciples should come by night and steale Christ out of the sepulchre wherein hee was laid,

Eph. 1. 13

Ephes. 4. 30

Dan. 6. 8.

Mat. 27.
66.

laid, *They went and made the sepulchre sure, and sealed the stone, Matth. 27. 66.*

When wee haue put our seale to a writing, by the law of Nations it is firme. Shall the Seale of a mortall man bee of that force, that no law can alter it; and shall the obfignation of the holy Spirit be of lesse vertue and power? This were to make God lesse than man.

Eph. 1. 14

Againe, it is the earnest of our inheritance, untill the redemption of the possession purchased vnto the praise of his glory. Now the nature of an earnest (we know) is to binde any contract or bargaine, and to giue a kind of state, and possession of the

the thing bargained for. Gods Spirit is his earnest which he hath laid for his, to assure the hearts of his children, of their full possession of that inheritance which Christ hath purchased, and God hath prepared for them.

Now if any shall obieſt, that we may either lose or forfeit our earnest, and so misse of the bargaine: you must know that the Spirit of God doth neuer finally and wholly depart from those vnto whom it is once giuen, as appears, *Ioh. 14. 16, 17.*

But had not *Dauid* lost the Spirit of God, when he prayed so earnestly vnto the Lord, that hee would
restore

Obiect.

Psa. 51. 12

restore vnto him the ioy of his saluation, and stablish him with his free Spirit?

Answ.

This obiection may bee said to answer it selfe. Could *Dauid*, without the presence and assistance of the Spirit, haue beene thus earnest with the Lord in prayer?

Againe, a difference must be put betwixt the presence of the Spirit, and the feeling or comfort of the Spirit. A hand benumbed with cold, or stunted with some blow, may hold a thing, and yet haue no feeling of it. It doth not follow, that (therefore) Gods Spirit hath vtterly forsaken a man, because in his apprehension and feeling
he

he takes it to be so. Therefore in stead of perplexing and troubling thy selfe about needlesse feares of reiection and finall falling from grace, labour to bee furnished with sound evidences of true grace; and then (my life for thine) *God, who hath begunne a good worke in thee, will confirme it vntill the day of Iesus Christ, Phil. 1. 6.*

Phil. 1. 6.

Here some weake beleeuer may reply, and say; If I had as good a heart as many haue; or if I were indowed with as much grace as some be, I should then haue lesse feare, and more hope of holding out vnto the end; but (alas) I am a poore sinfull creature,
full

Obiect.

full of frailties, and compassed about with manifold infirmities, and therefore feare my selfe.

Ans.

For thy comfort, thou must know, that Gods grace is sufficient for thee, and his power is made perfect through weaknesse, it is not the greatnesse, but the truth of grace which the Lord respects, *A bruised reed shall hee not breake, and smoking flax shall he not quench, untill he bring forth iudgement vnto victory.* If grace in thee be sound and true, though it be no more than a graine of mustard-seed, it shall bee able to bring thee vnto glory.

Matth. 12.

20

Obiect.

It may bee so if I could belecue this, but I cannot be

be fully perswaded of this thing.

If thou beleeue not, yet *abideth God faithfull, he cannot deny himselfe*, as the Apostle sayes, *2 Tim. 2. 13.*

Let no man, from this which hath beene spoken, grow secure and carelesse, as if he were out of all feare and danger of losing his comfort, or lessening that grace which he hath receiued. For though it be true, that true grace cannot bee vtterly lost, yet through pride, securitie, earthly-mindednesse, and the like, the childe of God may fall into such languishing fits, that the life of grace may appeare to bee vtterly extinct in him.

Suppose

Answ.

1 Tim. 5. 6

Suppose our bodies were of that temper and constitution, that no poison or infection could make a rent betwixt the soule and them; were it not folly, nay were it not madnesse for any one to cut and wound himselfe; or through mis-dieting of himselfe, and surfers, so to impaire his strength and health; that his life should bee a continuall faintnesse and sicknesse. Euen so it is with vs, in respect of grace, the life of our soules, for that soule which is destitute of grace, is dead whiles it liueth, as appeares 1 *Tim.* 5. 6. What though grace once seazing vpon the soule, cannot be wholly separated from it? yet may it through

through our spirituall distempers take such a surfet, as little strength, or power thereof may euer appeare in vs. For wee dare not denie but that the childe of God may fall foully, both in doctrine and manners, both in opinion and practice. First, he may fall into grievous and grosse errors, not onely such as doe weaken and shake, but euen such as doe ouerturne the foundation, ouerthrow faith. But here wee must put a difference betwixt the errors of the Elect, and the errors of the reprobate. If the child of God doth erre fundamentally, it is out of humane fragilitie and weaknesse, or through
the

the subtiltie of false teachers who by strength of argument & wit haue borne him downe for the present, as the Galatians fell into a fundamentall error, holding iustification by works, and ioyning the ceremoniall law with Christ: but such of them as belonged to the election of grace, were (no doubt) brought out of their error, and receiued the loue of the truth that they might bee saued. Whereas reprobate ones, *holding the truth in unrighteousnesse, haue strong delusions sent them to beleue lies, that they all might bee damned that beleue not the truth, but haue pleasure in unrighteousnesse, 2 Thess. 2. 11, 12.* Second-

Secondly, the childe of God may fall foully in his manners, and practice.

Hee may estrange himselfe from such of Gods people, as take vp a stricter course of life, than he likes well of. In stead of applauding or approouing their holy course and practice he may fall to censuring, if not downe right condemning of it. Such of the godly as he hath formerly reuerenced and embraced, taking them into his armes, and bosome for godlinesse sake, he may now bawke & shun, or looke asquint vpon them, because they fauour him not in some vnrighteous course, or will not ioyne with him in some euill

euill, vnbecoming their holy profession.

He may also distaste a faithfull and powerfull Ministerie, especially if it fall vpon those sins where with hee is now pleased. And whereas (of old) neither way nor weather could keepe him from Gods house; his heart being so sharpe set vpon hearing, that hee thought it a sinne to misse a Sermon; now euery small occasion is a lyon in his way; he is now more wise and prouident (hee thinks) than to mispend his time in running after preachers; hee now begins to loath that *Manna*. which was once more sweet to his soule than

than his appointed food.

Besides he may not onely thus fall from his former zeale and strictnesse, but hee may fall into a fearefull loosenesse: for whereas once hee hated all appearance of euill, lothed the very garment spotted with the flesh, not bearing with any sinne, or sinners; he is now for all societie, for all talke, for any seruice, good or bad, godly or profane, all is fish that comes to his net; though of the two, hee giues the right hand of fellowship to him whom they call good fellow.

Besides the gifts and graces of the Spirit may not onely be cooled, but in a manner extinct in him:

N^o Whereas

Whereas hee sometime made it his constant course and practice, not only with his family, but also alone by himselfe, to spend sometime of the day in praying, reading, &c. yea, and with that ioy and affection, as if holy exercises had beene the very ioy, and reioycing of his soule. In his prayers you might haue seene him like *Jacob* wrestling with God, as if he resolved not to giue the Lord ouer vntill he had got a blessing from him. But now seldome, or not at all will serue the turne for these holy duties, his hands are so heauy, that he can hardly lift them vp vnto the Lord. And last of all, he may fall into such
grosse,

grosse, and grieuous finnes, as if grace were vtterly extinct in him, and euen swallowed vp of corruption; yea, hee may fall into presumptuous finnes; hee may wittingly, willingly, and vwillfully fall into sinne, and for a while bee vnder the dominion of presumptuous finnes, from which the Prophet *Dauid* prayed that he might be kept, *Psal.* 19.13.

Which condition is fearefull for any childe of God to fall into, not onely in regard of others, but especially in regard of himselfe.

It is fearefull in regard of others, both good and bad. The godly they grieue

N 2 and

and mourne at the hearing, or seeing of any such woful declension in one that hath made profession of godlinesse, their hearts are pierced, and wounded, that it should bee thus with any one that hath given better hopes, or professed better things.

The wicked, of the other side, they either spue out their venome against godlinesse, and blaspheme downe-right all the Lords people, saying, Such they are all, these are your Professors; or else they triumph, and reioyce at his fall, as if they had obtained some spoile, or victorie.

But this condition is a
great

grace deale more fearefull
in respect of himselfe that
is thus fallen. For though
the Lord doe not take away
his louing kindenesse from
him, nor falsifie his truth;
yet may he visit his trans-
gressions with a rod, and his
iniquities with strokes, Psal.
89.32. The Lord may ex-
ercise him with many hea-
uie and fearefull bodily
iudgements, so as he shall
end his dayes in some out-
ward wo, and misery: or if
not (which is a great deale
worse) the LORD may
with-draw from him the
sweet comforts, and gra-
cious presence of his holy
Spirit, spoile his soule of
the ioyes of saluation, so as
he shall neuer be able to re-

couer againe his former happy condition in many particulars. And which is worse of all, and most fearefull and dreadfull to thinke of, God may strike his heart with feare, and horror of eternall wrath and vengeance, possesse his soule with hellish despaire, so that through the violence of tentation, he may lay violent hands vpon himselfe, and so end his dayes in a lamentable manner. Thus the Lord may make him a spectacle to Angels and men, that all others that heare of this may dread and feare to turne the grace of God into wantonnesse, or to grieue his sweet and holy Spirit. Therefore
that

that no man may bee settled vpon the lees of securitie, or sing a *requiem* vnto his owne soule, consider daily what strength and life is in that grace which God hath bestowed vpon thee; lest before thou beest aware of it, grace bee cooled and declining in thee; which if it be, will appeare by these symptomes.

The first is an inordinate appetite vnto such things as are noxious and hurtfull vnto the soule. For, as our bodily health is impaired and weakened, by feeding vpon such things as are in antipathie vnto our nature and constitution; so it fares with our soules, if wee be bold vvith sinne the soules

I
Symptomes of declining in grace.

N 4 bane,

bane, the strength of grace growes quickly feeble in vs.

2

The second is the abating of our spirituall taste; when wee finde not the sweetnesse and comfort in the Word, which formerly wee haue done; when wee feede not vpon the Word with that desire and apperite which once wee did, this argues some distemper in the soule. For as in bodily meates, when they grow vnfaouury to our palats, it is most euident that our stomackes haue in them some distemper: so it is with our soules; if the same Word haue not the same rellish with vs now, which

which sometime it had, we may say there is some spirituall distemper.

Thirdly, when we brook not, when wee digest not the Word as well as formerly we haue done. Euill concoction of our meat argues a cold stomacke, or at least an abatement of the natieue heat: so when people digest not Gods Word, the food of their soules, but vomit it vp againe, either by storming against it, censuring of it, or wilfully neglecting the power and practice of it, it is a signe of declining in grace.

Fourthly and lastly, if there bee a cold, drowfie, and formall performance of the duties of Gods wor-

N 5

ship

3.

4

ship and seruice : when a man is not so cheerfull and liuely vnto and in good duties, as of old ; this argues a decaying of his spirituall strength. As in bodily labour, when a man begins to giue in, when there is not that strength and power in his Armes, Legges and Backe, which sometimes hath beene, we see, and say, Nature is debilitated and weakned in such a man; euen so, when wee performe not holy duties with that zeale and spirituall vigour (though it may bee with lesse strength of bodie, the Organes being decayed, through age or sicknesse) which formerly wee haue done, wee may
feare

feare grace is in some declension.

But is there no hope, no helpe to recouer out of this spirituall relapse? Yes, for howsoever it bee a grievous spectacle to behold a Christian so decayed in grace, and it should cause him that is thus fallen, to lament and bewaile his condition (if it were possible) with teares of bloud; yet whiles there is life there is hope, and to keep such from despayre God hath left examples (in his word) of his deere Children, most holy men, that haue runne so farr behind-hand, as if they had spent all this grace, and all former gifts of sanctification were euen blasted in then,

them, which yet haue againe recovered grace before they died. Know therefore, thou that art thus decayed in grace, that there is a possibility for thee to strengthen that which remaines, and is readie to dye, if thou wilt speedily set upon those helpes which shall be prescribed for thy recovery: which are these.

First of all, thy soule must bee deeply afflicted with Godly sorrow, with sound and vnfained humiliation and repentance; for great sinnes must be greatly repented of. This humiliation of thine must not be the hanging downe of thy head for a day like a bull-rush; but if it be possible, let thy

thy teares runne downe like
a river, day and night : take
thee no rest, neither let the
apple of thine eye cease.
Arise, crie in the night : in
the beginning of the wat-
ches powre out thine heart
like water before the Lord.

Lam. 2. 18, 19. Giue the
Lord no rest vntill hee re-
turne in mercie and make
vp those breaches, and heale
those wounds which sinne
hath made in thy poore
soule. If thou canst get
thy heart to be kindly bro-
ken, if thy soule can be truly
humbled, the Lord will
make thee to heare ioy and
gladnesse, that thy broken
bones may reioyce, yea he
will restore into thee the
joy of thy saluation, and sta-
blish

blish thee with his free spirit, *Psal.* 51. 8, 12. for the Lord hath promised to dwell with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit to reuiue the spirit of the humble and to giue life to them that are of a contrite heart, *Esay* 57. 15. Godly sorrow is the prime and chiefe remedy to cure the soule of euery spirituall malady. As in the body nature hath a faculty of expelling that which is noxious and hurtfull, as the lungs by coughing, the braines by sneezing, the stomacke by vomiting, so the soule by godly sorrow and repentance, euacuates such malignant humors as doe threaten the destruction there.

thereof. Therefore that counsell which the Lord gaue to soule-sicke decaied *Ephesus*, I giue to thee, Remember from whence thou art fallen and repent *Apoc.*

2. 5.

2

Secondly, thou must iudge and condemne thy selfe for thy sinnes. This was a meanes of bringing that graceless prodigall into grace againe with his father. I haue sinned against heauen and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy sonne, *Luke 15. 21.* If we would iudge our selues we should not be iudged, *1 Cor. 11. 31.* This is a worke wherein our vile hearts take small content (for what pleasure hath any bankrupt

rupt in casting vp his accounts, or in reuiewing his bookes?) and the diuell, if it bee, possible will hold vs chat about something else, or else perswade vs that it will be a fruitlesse worke to iudge our selues, but the more auerse and indisposed wee are vnto this duty of iudging our selues, the more ready and busie we shall see Satan to let and hinder vs from it, the more eagerly should wee enforce our selues vnto it. Therefore iudge thy selfe and bee reuenged vpon thy selfe, by curbing of thy flesh, and abridging thy selfe euen of lawfull liberties; condemne thy selfe speedily, that God and thy conscience condemne

demne thee not eternally.

Thirdly be instant, and earnest with the Lord in prayer, cry mightily vnto God, cry as it were out of the belly of hell, as did *Ionas* 2. 2. Offer vp prayers with strong crying and teares vnto him that is able to saue thee from death, *Hebr.* 5. 7. Intreate the Lord to repayre once more that blessed image of his which is now defaced in thee: Pray in faith, and vrge the Lord with his promise, who hath said he will receiue such sinners as returne vnto him, and change the hue of their bloody sins, which though they were as crimson they shall be made as whit as snow: though they

they were red like scarlet
they shall be as wooll, *Esa.*
1. 18. Ply the Lord at the
throne of grace, giue him
no rest, be importunate with
him vntil he hath heard thy
request, and fulfilled the
desire of thy soule, which
(as you shall heare in the
second vse of the doctrine)
the Lord hath promised,
and will most certainly
performe vnto all his.

Fourthly and lastly, re-
new thy couenant and
vowes with the Lord; en-
ter into a new league with
him, bind thy selfe to a con-
scionable vvalking before
him in all holy duties, carry
a strait hand, and a watch-
full eye ouer thine owne
heart; lest that it start aside
before

before thou be ware of it; or Satan (who will neuer leaue soliciting thee vnto euill) take thee at some aduantage, and so preuaile with thee againe to stoope to his lure.

This is the course which must be taken, if euer thou wouldst recouer thy losse: which course though it be painfull, yet seeing it will proue gainfull and profitable, let it be speedily set vpon: What paines would we not indure for the safety of our bodies? Incisions, searings; yea, cutting off of a member gangren'd rather than hazard the whole bodie: shall we indure thus much for the good of our bodies, and not much more take

take vp the practise of those things, that tend to the saluation of our soules? Some say, a bone being broken and well set againe, is stronger than it was before; it so falls out sometimes with grace in the hearts of Gods children: after their falling, they haue been more confirmed, as was *Peter*, they haue walked more humbly, more watchfully, more closely, and more thankfully all the daies of their life after, the Lord in great mercie working good out of their euill: But let no man dare to tempt the Lord in hope of such a recovery, lest the Lord leaue him, and so he fall into that fearefull plight we before spake of.

Con-

Consider therefore, my brethren, I beseech you, seriously of these things, that so you may (by the grace of God) be the better able to prevent declining, or being fallen, may remember from whence yce are fallen, and repent, and doe your first works. Apoc. 2.5.

Thus hauing acquainted you with the differences betwixt true and counterfeit grace : hauing laid downe the euidences of true grace ; and thirdly, hauing shewed the reasons why grace is of that excellencie and worth aboue all the world : I now come to the fourth and last thing which I propounded, and that is to make some vse and application

Use 1.

application of the point.

Is it so, that it hath beene
proued, that grace is the
best thing wee can partake
of ? Then lamentable is the
blindnesse, and pitifull is
the ignorance of the grea-
test part of the world, who
neither see their nor want,
nor yet the worth of grace.
How many be there who
place all happinesse in these
outward things, riches, ho-
nours, pleasures, &c ? Ta-
king those to bee the onely
happy men, whose bellies
the Lord fills with earthly
treasures. O, he is a happy
man (say they,) he cannot
doe amisse, hee hath the
world at will. These are
such as live by sense, *Whose
hearts goe after their eyes, as*
Job

Iob 31. 7. These are such as minde earthly things, and therefore say, as *Psal. 4. 6.* *Who will shew vs any good?* They encumber themselves with the things of this life, neglecting grace, the onely thing needfull; yea, that which is of absolute necessity vnto saluation. Is it not a thing much to be lamented, that in this glorious noone-tide of the Gospel, people should so dote vpon the world, as if there were no other goodnesse vnder the Sunne, but to be great, to be honorable, to eat and drinke, to take their sports, and follow their pleasures and profits? If *Paul* in his dayes could not speake, nor write it without

our griefe and weeping, to consider how many went amadding after the world, minding earthly things; surely if hee liued in these our times, his heart would not ake, but breake, to see how eager people are vpon the world, how little grace is respected & looked after, no more than the refuse and parings of our nailes. Whereas, if a man had all the world, and want grace, he hath in account nothing, but if he want all outward things, and be indowed with grace, he hath enough, for grace is sufficient for him: yet, alas, as the Israelites were scattered vp and downe Ægypt to gather stubble, and to picke

picke vp strawes; so the
greatest part of the world
hunt vp and downe, beat
their braines, vse their wits,
and stretch their consci-
ences for those things,
which (compared with
grace) are no better than
straw or stubble. The
condition of many people
wold be a great deale more
tolerable, (if any tolerati-
on may be of euill) if their
want of grace proceeded
from meere ignorance of
the price and worth, or
the necessitie of grace: but
too many there bee who
are destitute of grace, meer-
ly through their neglect of
the meanes of grace; nay
(which is worse) from
gracelesse and wicked con-

O

temp

tempt of it, scoffing and scorning the practice of it, wheresoeuer they behold it. Where shall a man liue, or whither shall hee goe, where hee shall not meet with some scoffing and flouting *Ismael*, or some scorning *Michol*, to flout the practice of pietie, and tooth and naile to bring it into disgrace? If any amongst them be like (*Saul* amongst the people) higher in matters of religion, or more forward in the practice of holinesse than themselves, how is hee maligned and contemned? Hee is hunched at (as *Ioseph* was amongst his brethren, who could not speake peaceably vnto him) hee is hated of them,

Gen. 37. 4

them, as *Iacob* was hated of *Eſau*, because his owne works were euill, and his brothers good. 1 *Ioh.* 3. 12. Had not our sweet Sauour foretold vs of the iniquitie of these last times, we might wonder, that these dayes of the Gospel should bring forth such prodigious monsters as these are. Oh let vs pitie then, and bewaile their gracelesse condition. I haue read of one *Marcellus*, a Roman Captaine, who hauing taken *Syracusa*, and entred the Citie, teares fell from his cheekes to see so great a multitude of people, and so goodly a Citie to be captiuated. Hath the outward and bodily misery of others, occasioned

O 2 sorrow

sorrow in those that were heathens, yea, enemies; and shall not we that are Christians weepe and mourne to see so many soules, so many of our friends and acquaintance to be captivated of sin and Satan, to perish body and soule through the want of grace? Shew wee our true compassion, not onely in being affected with the misery and danger of gracelesse persons, but also in labouring to pull them out of the snares of the Diuell, of whom they are captivated at his will. Of old, Gods people were enioyned to bring home their neighbours, yea, their enemies Oxe or Asse, if they met them

1 Tim. 2.
26.

them going astray, *Exod.* 23. 4. Will God haue vs to take care of Oxen and As-
ses, and not (much more)
to regard the soules of our
brethren? *Let him know,*
that he which conuerts a sin-
ner from going astray out of
his way, shall saue a soule from
death and shall hide a multi-
tude of sins, Iam. 5. 20.

Againe, is grace the most
excellent thing we can at-
taine vnto? Then let this
set an edge vpon our affe-
ctions, let it be as a spur in
our sides to make vs mend
our pace, and make more
haste after grace. If you
were perswaded of your
happinesse in the possession
thereof, if you were sensi-
ble of your misery in the

Use 2.

want of it, as *Rachel* cryed vnto her husband for children, *Gen. 30. 1. Giue mee children, or else I die;* so thou wouldest crie out, Lord, giue mee of thy grace, or else I die. I see how wretched and miserable I am wanting grace: Oh what shall I doe, that I may obtaine grace? Wouldest thou haue grace? Then be an humble and earnest suter at the throne of grace. Seek it aright, & thou shalt be sure to find it. If thou knewest the gift of God (saied Christ to the woman of Samaria) thou wouldest haue asked of him, and he would haue giuen thee water of life, *Ioh. 4. 10.* which words doe plainly teach vs, that all those

those which doe sue and
seeke for grace, shall ob-
taine and haue it. Not that
euery kind of asking will
serue the turne: or that it
will bee found as soone as
euer it is sought for. Thou
must be sensible of thy want
of grace, thou must hunger
and thirst after it, or else it
will not be obtained. Bles-
sed are they which hunger
and thirst after righteous-
nesse, for they shall be filled,
Mat. 5. 6. I will giue to
him that is a-thirst of the
water of life freely, *Reu. 21.*
6. Therefore let him that
is a-thirst come, *Reu. 22. 17.*
Thou must find and feele
thy soule pained, and pined
through the want of grace,
and then call and cry in-
stantly

O 4

Num. 23.
10.

stantly, vncessantly that so thou maiest obtaine it. Doe not thinke that grace will bee had with a wet finger; or that it will come to hand with a whistle. Cold and flitting desires of grace may be found in the wicked. *Balaam* could say, *Let me dye the death of the righteous, &c.* There may be some sudden **flashes in the harts of reprobates.** The conscience of a wicked man may sometimes stir and wamble at the hearing of the word, he may be sermon-sicke, and wish that his soule were in the stead and condition of the godly; haply he may be perswaded that he is in a miserable, and woefull condition, through the want of grace, and

and yet neuer come to haue his soule brething and panting after grace and goodnes; for he neuer comes to see (much lesse to loath & forsake) some bosome and darling sins; and so neuer know what this blessed hunger and thirst meaneth. Great things must be greatly, and earnestly sought for, and desired. Thou must sigh deeply, aske earnestly, seeke diligently, knock constantly, and waite patiently vpon God in the vse of his holy ordinances, before such an excellent thing as grace is will be obtained, or powred into such a filthie soule as thine is. *The Kingdome of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force,*

Mat. 11. 12. Thou must feele thy soule emptie, and vtterly destitute of grace, or else thou wilt neuer hunger nor thirst after it. What made that miserable prodigall so desirous of huskes? Pouerty pincht him, and hunger bit him. I die for hunger, *Luke 15. 17.* The person that is full, despiseth an honie combe : but vnto the hungry soule euery bitter thing is sweet, *Pro. 27. 7.* The full fed Isralite, loathed *Manna*, and quailles, but hungry *Eazarus* would haue beene glad of crummes. He hath filled the hungry with good things, *Luk. 1. 53.* I dare boldly say that there was was neuer any poore, hungry, and humble sinner
(groning

(grouing vnder the weight and burden of his finnes, and growing wearie of his old courses) which did truly and seriously set himselfe to seeke for grace, either repented him of his paines or lost his labour. Ye shall seeke me, and shall find me, because ye seek me with all your heart, *Ier. 29. 12, 13.* The Lord is neere vnto all that call vpon him : yea to all that call vpon him in truth, *Psal. 145. 18.* Encline your eares and come vnto me, and your soule shall liue, *Esay 55. 3.* Many (as it was said vnto *Baruch*) seeke for themselves great things, *Ier. 45. 5.* Many have deepe plots and great proiects for these outward things ;

things ; and the Lord doth not only crosse, but (oft times) curse their deuices, and proiects, so as their designs come to nought, and perish as doth the vntimely fruit of a woman. But neuer was there one or other which did seriously and in sincerity seek for grace, but had good speed, and the desire of his heart satisfied, the Lord in his due time graciously did answer him. He will fulfill the desire of them that feare him : he also will heare their cry, and will saue them, *Psal.* 145. 19. Let vs then goe boldly vnto the throne of grace, that we may receiue mercy, and find grace to helpe in time of need, *Hebr.* 4. 16.

Be

Be intreated therefore to throw downe thy selfe before the throne of grace; confesse thy sins vnto the God of Grace; intreat his Maiestie to pitie the poore confounded worke of his owne hands, by the malice of Satan and the poison of sin most wofully defiled. Beseech him for his Christs sake, to breath into thy empty soule some blast of grace, to fill thy empty, barren, and gracelesse heart with the fruits of his Spirit. This earnest desire of thine will bee a good euidence to thy soule of some good comming towards thee, of some seed of grace already sown in thee, it being an effect of grace to bewaile

bewaile the want of grace, and to bee earnest with the Lord for a supply thereof. If thou wert in any bodily want or necessity, Towne and Countrey (peradventure) should heare if not ring of it. Thou canst heartily pray for, and earnestly seeke out for outward necessities, food, clothing, fire, &c. But to whom dost thou make thy complaint of the want of grace? Whereas grace being the most excellent thing, should in the first place be desired for thy selfe, thy wife, thy husband, thy children, &c. If thou hast grace, thou hast gotten a rich portion, a great possession, thy line is false in a faire ground. If
thou

thou seest grace wrought in the hearts of thy children, thou mayest be freed from carefulnesse, or seeking great things for them, they haue a great, a rich portion. The Heathen could say that, *Vertue was a sufficient Dowrie.* And the Scripture saith, *The Lord will not famish the soule of the righteous.* Labour not then for the meat which perisheth, but labour for the meat that endureth vnto euerlasting life, *Ioh. 6. 27.* Grace is meat that endureth, and bringeth (as we haue heard) vnto euerlasting life. Naturally we affect, and couet such things as are lasting, but when we conceiue them to be both lasting

lasting and good, then we prize them at an higher rate, and set more by them. Oh let those properties then enhance the price of grace, and let vs labour more for it than for all the riches, and treasures of the world, seeing they are but dung in comparison of grace, as may easily appeare vnto you.

For first, grace may procure, and fetch in riches and outward things, as our Sauiour hath said. Seeke ye first the kingdome of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be ministred vnto you, *Mat.* 6. 33. Riches, and treasures shall be in the house of the righteous, *Psal.* 112. 3. I may say of grace, as *Salomon*

man doth of wisedome, *Pro.*
3.16,17. Length of dayes is
in her right hand, and in her
left riches, and glory. Her
wayes are wayes of plea-
sure, and all her paths pros-
perity; whereas all the ho-
nours and riches of the
world cannot purchase or
procure one dramme of
grace; this is a supernatu-
rall worke, and gift of God
freely bestowed vpon his
deare ones.

Besides it is grace which
giues a well-being to riches,
honours, and all outward
things; without grace these
are vnsanctified vnto vs,
they are occasions of much
euill; God is highly disho-
noured, and man much hurt
by them. To the wicked,
their

their table is a snare before them, and their prosperitie their ruine, *Psal. 69. 22.* Prosperitie and abundance (without grace) makes men proud, and causeth them to be adder-eared at the voice of God. I spake vnto thee when thou wast in prosperity, but thou saidest I will not heare : whereas the more grace we haue, the more humble we are, and more willing to heare, and ready to obey whatsoever God shall speake vnto vs.

Thirdly, if it were possible for a man to bee possessed of all the riches and honors of the world, these may make him great, and glorious in the eyes of men, but he shall be neuer a whit the more

more esteemed of God for them. He accepteth not the persons of princes, and regardeth not the rich more than the poore, for they be all the workes of his hands, *Iob* 34. 19. Whereas grace maketh vs louely, and honourable in the Lords eye, yea, a dere, and precious vnto him. As we finde in *Esa.* 44. 4. Thou wast precious in my sight, and wast honorable, and I loued thee.

Fourthly, riches will not auaille vs in the euill day: they cannot defend vs from any blow the Lord intended to giue vs. If God will smite vs, no outward things can shelter or defend vs. Neither their siluer nor their gold shall be able to deliuer

deliuer them in the day of the Lords wrath, *Zeph. 1. 18.* whereas grace is as a shield, and helmet. Put on the brestplate of faith and loue, and the hope of saluation for an helmet, *1 Theff. 5. 8.* The Lord will blesse the righteous, and with fauour will compasse him as with a shield, *Psal. 5. 1-2.* Righteousnesse preserveth the vpright, *Pro. 13. 6.*

Fifely, and lastly, suppose a man after long trauell, and sore labour hath gotten vnto himselfe abundance of these outward things, large and great possessions; and what hath he gotten? even clay, winde, vanity, yea nothing. For so the wise man calleth riches, *Pro. 23. 5.*

Whereas

Wheras he that hath obtained grace, hath got durable riches, that which will stand by him and help him, when all outward worldly things will faile him. Therefore about all things in the world labour, and lay about for grace, seeing the best things of the world are not to be compared with it.

But how hard a thing is it for a minister of Christ to beat this into the heads of people, especially the poorer sort, who most neglect grace? and therefore they can rise early, lye downe late, and cate the bread of carefulnesse; they can call and crie for these outward things for themselves and theirs; but how few

few will stirre one foot, or wet a finger for the obtaining of grace? How many poore soules neuer had any one thought tending that way? not so much as once dreame of the necessitie of grace, and therefore crouble not themselves about it? Let all such beware, lest as a Captaine (who finding one of his watchmen, which kept sentinell, asleepe) cut off his head, saying, Dead I found thee, and dead I leaue thee: so the Lord cut off these with the sword of his wrath and vengeance, leauing them for euer dead in sinne, as he found them. Be intreated therefore, I doe most earnestly beseech you,
speedily

speedily to seeke out for grace. There is a time when grace may be had, but if that time be let slippe, there will come a time wherein we shall call for grace but shall not haue it, seeke for grace, but shall not finde it, *Prov. 1. 28.* The offer of grace ends, with vs when our life ends, and that may be (for ought thou knowest) this night before to morow comes. Learne wisdom of the men of the world, who will be sure to take their time, they will make hay whiles the sun shines : were the grace of God in our owne power or disposing, we might (as many rich men doe) eate, when we haue a stomacke, when,

when our appetite serues :
but we are poore in this re-
spect, and liue vpon almes,
and therefore should be af-
fected as poore people are,
who are no sooner called to
receiue an almes, but are
ready and runne with hand
stretched out to receiue it.
Oh beware of trifling out
the season of grace. To day,
euen whiles it is called to
day, seeke out for grace. *Be-
hold, now is the accepted time,
euen now is the day of saluati-
on, 2 Cor. 6. 2.* God is I
am: *To day, if you will heare
his voice, harden not your
hearts, Hebr. 3. 7, 8.* Put
not off vntill to morrow.
If thou beest not fit to day
thou maist be more vnfit to
morrow, yee cannot tell
what

what shall be to morrow,
Iam. 4. 14. It may be thou
shalt never see the morrow;
as it fell out with *Archias*,
who receiuing a letter
which aduertised him of
present danger, would not
so farre interrupt his drin-
king as to take vp time to
read it, but resolved to read
it to morrow; and what fol-
lowed? he was that night
slaine at the banquet. We
see delayes are very dange-
rous. Be wise therefore for
thy poore soule as *Daniel*
was, who made haste and de-
layed not, *Psal. 119. 60.* Say
not as did *Felix* when hee
heard *Paul*; *Goe thy way for
this present, and when I haue
a conuenient time I will call
for thee, Act. 24. 26.* It is

iust with God thou shouldest misse of that time which thou proposhest vnto thy selfe, if thou wilt not lay hold of that season which the Lord doth offer vnto thee. There be some which profanely say, yong Saints may proue old diuels, but I dare boldly say, old deuils seldome or neuer proue yong Saints : he that hath contemned grace fourtie fifty or sixtie yeeres, very rarely, very hardly attaines vnto it afterward. *Remember now thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth, whiles the euill dayes come not, Eccles. 12. 1.* wilt thou spend the flower of thy dayes, the strength of thy youth in the lusts of the flesh, the seruice of

of the world, and the bondage of the diuell, and hope to finde the grace in thine old worn days? Consider what *Zophar* saith, *Iob* 20. 11. *His bones are full of the sinne of his youth, and it shall lye downe with him in the dust.* It is true, that God can giue grace at all times, euen at the last, but let no man dare to tempt the Lord in neglecting the time of grace, which for ought thou knowest may be this very instant. If now thou wilt open, when the Lord knocks, he will come in, & replenish thy soule with grace; but if thou wilt now giue him the repulse, it may be, thou shalt neuer haue offer more. What doest thou thinke it is

now too soone? thou wilt say hereafter; it is too late, the time is past. Consider what the Lord speakes by his prophet, *Thou remainest in thy filthinesse, and wickednesse : because I would haue purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged, till I haue caused my wrath to light vpon thee, Eze. 24. 13.* Suffer not the time of grace to passe ouer thee to thy confusion. Take heed lest the neglect, and contempt of grace doe hereafter wound thy soule, and sting thy conscience, when it will be too late for thee to seeke and cry for grace, the date of grace and mercy being out with thee. That this which I haue spoken may take

take the better effect and deeper impression in thy heart, know, that Thou art a vile and odious creature in the Lords eye, vntill such time as his image bee renewed in thee; vntill the worke of grace be wrought in thee, thou art more loathsome to God than a toad is to thee. Thy person, thy thoughts, thy words, thy deeds, nay thy seruice which thou performest vnto the Lord, he hates, and abhors; *for the way of the wicked is abomination to the Lord, Pro. 15.9. So is his sacrifice, ver. 8. so are his thoughts, ver. 26.*

Besides thou art not only a slaue to sinne, but thou art vnder the vassalage and bondage of the deuill; *for*

he is the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, Ioh. 2.2. vntill such time as grace be wrought in thee, vntill thou be brought to amendment of life, thou art in the snare of the diuel and art taken of him at his will, 2 Tim. 2. 26. To be a slaue to sinne and Satan is a most wofull and miserable flauery, worse than to be a gally slaue vnder the Turkes; for they that are gally slaues knowe their misery, mourne for it, and would gladly come out of it: whereas those that are in this spirituall bondage vnder sin and Satan see it not, feel it not, and therefore neither grieue for it, nor yet desire to be brought out of it.

it. Againe, thou art euery day in danger of some iudgment, thou art vnder the wrath of God, and therefore liuest in continuall danger of one stroke or other, yea of death, yea of hell and damnation, *for euill pursueth sinners*, *Proverbs* 13. 21. Be not therefore so blind, and sottish as to conclude of future safetie by thy present security. Wilt thou feare no danger, because thou feelest no iudgement? I tell thee thou lyeest vnder a most heavy and fearefull iudgement, in that thou art insensible of thy danger, and wilt not be perswaded of thy misery. To be giuen vp to blindnes of minde, and hardnes of heart

is a soule-killing iudgement, of all other most fearefull. Consider of these things, and the Lord giue thee vnderstanding, that so thou mayest be thoroughly perswaded of thy naturall misery, which thou must be, before euer thou wilt hunger and thirst after grace, before euer thou wilt call and cry vnto God for grace.

Use 3.

Thirdly, if *Grace be the most excellent thing*, why should we not labour and strue to grow in grace, as we are exhorted, *2 Pet. 3. 18*? An honest and good heart is neuer weary of increasing its stocke of grace, as worldlings are vnwearied in heaping vp transitory

ry riches, and lading themselves with clay, though sometimes it falls out, that outward things haue their satiety, and wee may bee cloyed with them, whereas in grace there is no nimity, a mans heart cannot be cloyed, nor clogg'd with it. Our life is a wayfare, a walke, no time of standing, we must still forwards on, and on, as those that haue a great iourney to goe. As the Lord said to *Elias* when hee found him sitting and sleeping vnder a Iuniper tree, *Vp and eate, thou hast a great iourney to goe*, 1 King. 19. 7. So we haue a long way, and a short day to finish it in; and therefore had need bestirre our

P 5 selues

1 Theff.
4. 1.

Ezek. 47.
3, 4.

selues to purpose : Therefore as *Paul* said to the *Thessalonians*, 1 *Theff.* 4. 1. so I to you: Now I beseech you brethren, and exhort you in the Lord *Iesus*, that yee increase more and more. Grace in the heart of Gods child, should be like the waters flowing from the Sanctuarie, *Ezek.* 47. 3, 4. which were at the first to the ankles, and after to the knees, and so to the loynes, and at last to a great deepe that could not be passed over. Though grace be low and shallow at the first in vs, we should so nourish and cherish it, that it may grow to ripenesse, and full holinesse in the feare of God, 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. Which that we may the better

better doe, obserue these directions: First, we must be careful to remoue away all euil hindring grace; and secondly, set vpon the practice of that good which will further it.

First of all, we must be carefull to plucke vp root and rinde of all such weeds as may ouer-grow, choak, and hinder the prospering of grace. One maine and ranke weed is spirituall pride and selfe-conceitednesse; which growes too fast in the best soile, being watered and cherished by the Deuill; who when hee cannot procure the childe of God to stoope to his lure, and bite at his bait of impietic and profanenesse, then

Take away euill things.

1 Pet. 5. 5.

then labours he to poison him with his owne venome, to puffe him vp and make him swell with pride of his gifts. He will make him proud of his knowledge, proud of his preaching, praying, &c. yea, (rather than faile) hee will make him proud of his humility, proud that he is not proud. Plucke vp this weed therefore, for it much hinders grace. *God resisteth the proud, and giueth grace to the humble. He fills the hungry with good things, and sends away the full empty, Luk. 1. 53.* Humble your selues therefore, and the Lord will exalt you. The more humble and lowly thou art, the freer thou art from shaking

king and ouer-turning; for wee see how houses stand fast, when many loftie and high buildings are blowne downe and fall. The higher any hill or mountaine is, the more barren it is; for the dew and raine which waters the earth, to make it fruitfull, tarries not vpon high hils, but fals downe into the valleyes, and makes them fruitfull; euen so the meanes of grace lighting vpon an high and lofty spirit, do fall from him, without soaking or entring into him, whereas lighting vpon the humble and lowly, they make him fertile, for *the humble he will teach his way, Psal. 25. 9.*

Psal. 25. 9.

Another weede which
must

Psal. 30.6.

must be pluckt vp, is selfe-confidence, or security. When Christians begin to beare themselves vpon their owne strength, and to grow presumptuous, the Lord off withdrawes from them the strength of his grace, as he tooke off the chariot wheels of *Pharaoh*, and then downe they fall. *David* was too selfe-confident, when hee said, *I shall neuer be moued* : therefore God soone hides away his face, and *David* was as quickly troubled. But of all other examples there is none for our purpose more remarkable than that of *Peter*, who took it in foule scorne to bee thought to be such a dastard and white liuered souldier, yea,

yea, such a false-hearted servant, as to forsake his Lord and Master in greatest extremity; and therefore (if you will take his word) he will neuer flinch, he will die for Christ, before he will deny him. But (when Christ fore-told his Apostles of their flinching from him) if *Peter* had thus replied; Lord, it may be thou seest more into me, and know'st my heart better than I know my selfe; wee are of our selues weake and fraile, ready to pull in our heads vpon euery storme; but Lord, the spirit is willing, though the flesh be fraile; of our selues we can do nothing any further than thou wilt assist vs; strengthen vs
therefore

therefore with thy grace, and then we will never flie from thee. If thus *Peter* had answered Christ, all had been well; but being foole-hardy, and selfe-confident, the Lord sets him vpon his owne legs, leaues him vnto himselfe; and what became of this boaster? at the word of a Maiden he denyes and forswears Christ, curses and damnes himselfe if euer he knew him. Thus when Gods children grow carelesse, too confident, or are ouer-taken with a dead sleep of carnall security, the Lord oft stands by, lets Satan loose, and layes the reines vpon their owne necks, whereby they come oft-times to be ouer-taken
with

with grosse and shamefull
sins: the Lord in wisdom
vsing (as bodily Physicians
oft doe) desperate medi-
cines and remedies, for the
curing of some desperate
disease preuailing in them,
or growing vpon them.
Againe, there is another
weed to be plucked vp, and
that is *Insincerity*, if I may so
call it; the want of truth
and vprightnesse of heart :
call it *Hypocrisie*, if you will,
that stinking weed, which
like the wilde Gourd, *sow-*
red all the Pottage, 2 King.
4. 40. The Lord loueth
truth in the inward parts,
and loathes the contrary.
Vprightnesse and sincerity
helpes forward the worke
of grace, as appeares, *Psal.*
84.

2 King 4.
40.

84. 11. *The Lord will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walke uprightly.*

The want of vprightnesse will make grace to wither.

It is not possible for that tree to stand long, which is rotten at the root, it may for a while seeme fresh and greene, but as it takes no root downward, so it will not (long) beare fruit vpward, for when the wind begins to blow hard, down it falls. Whereas a gracious heart (which truly delights in the Law of God, and meditates therein alone in the night, as well as openly in the day) *is like a tree planted by the riuers of waters, that will bring forth her fruit*

Psal. 1. 1, 2

fruit in due season, whose lease shall not fade, but be greene, and neuer cease yeelding fruit.

As these weeds must be plucked out of the heart, or else grace cannot possibly thriue or prosper; so there be certaine briers and thornes which must bee stubbed vp, or else grace will quickly be choked in vs. These thornes are the cares of this world, and the deceitfulnesse of riches, which whiles some haue lusted after, *they erred from the faith, and pierced themselves thorow with many sorowes.*

Mat. 13.
22.

1 Tim. 6.
10.

These things, sayes Paul, 1 Tim. 6. 11. we must flye, and follow after righteousness, godlinesse, faith, &c. implying

implying that grace will not thrive, if love of money bee not rooted out of vs. What choked grace (if any was) in *Demas*, but the love of the world? Oh the multitude of soules that haue miscarried, and for ought we know to the contrary, might haue done well, if riches had not been; not that riches are the cause, but an occasion of their miscarrying! What parted Christ, & that hopeful young man in the Gospel? *Mat. 19.* was it not the love of riches? Many haue begunne well in their youth, and giuen good hope, but in their age haue growne cold, through the love of the world. If once
mens

mens hearts begin to goe after their eyes, and to be set upon the world, twenty to one but grace goes to decay in them; for the world will afford a man little time to exercise those things which hold vp the life of grace; as prayer, reading, hearing, &c. If the world hath seized vpon the heart, it fumes vp into the head, and fills the braine, sleeping and waking with restlesse thoughts, which way to compasse businesse, contriue things and bring ends together, so as scarce once in the day a good thought comes to minde, but one occasion or other of the world stifles it, or shuffles it out, so as it comes
to

Pla. 62. 10.

to nothing. Therefore if riches increase, *set not your heart vpon them, Psal. 62. 10.* Vse them as thornes for thy weale to stop a gap withall, to fence thee from outward harmes, or to warme thee, but lie not vpon them, hold them not too hard, lest they strike into thee, and wound thee; remember alwaies, that they are thornes, good in their lawfull vse, and when they are rightly husbanded, but otherwise noxious and hurtful. They are thornes, they will ouer-grow and choak all good things that grow neere them, if they be let alone.

Againe, there be many bad humours, foolish and noysome

noysome lusts which must be purged out of the heart, or else grace will neuer thriue nor prosper in it; to wit, enuy, hatred, malice, guile, dissimulation, filthinesse, cuill speakings, and the like, which corrupt goodnesse. Therefore *S. Peter* exhorting his brethren, to whom hee wrote, to embrace the sincere milke of the Word, that they might grow therby, prepares them to this, by aduising them to lay aside those base distempers, for they doe much hinder the growth of Grace: where they are, they take away the glory and beauty of a Christian, and make him vnseemely in the eyes of his brethren; they dar-
ken

Deut. 21.

13.

1 Pet. 2. 11.

ken his lustre, and doe blot
and blemish his holy pro-
fession. Therefore away
with these, lay these aside,
not as a man doth his ap-
parell, with a resolution to
take it vp againe; but as the
captiue maid, when she was
to be married, laid aside the
garment of her captiuitie,
Deut. 21. 13. with a resolu-
tion neuer more to put it
on. *Abstaine from all fleshly
lusts, for they fight against
thy soule, 1 Pet. 2. 11.* As
Easterne windes doe nippe
herbs and flowers, and cold
stormes doe hinder trees
from growing: so fleshly
lusts nip grace in the bud,
as it were, and blast it in the
bloomie, that (if it dieth
not, yet) it comes not for-
ward

ward so fast as otherwise it would.

Last of all, take heed and beware of the needlesse and familiar societie of gracelesse and godlesse persons; for they are the quench-coale, nay, the very bane and poyson of grace vnto many. *He that is a companion of fooles, shall bee destroyed;* or as *Iunius* hath it, He shall bee made worse, *Pro. 13. 20.* God hath branded wicked persons for fooles, they are fooles in graine, as may appeare by diuerse things.

First, in that they make it their sport and pastime, to doe wickedly, which no wise man dares do, none but fooles will doe, *Pro. 10. 23.*

Q Second-

2

Secondly, in that they hate to bee reformed, and will not bee beate out of their old wayes and courses, because they be such as doe best affect, and please them; *The way of a foole is right in his owne eyes: but hee that hearkneth vnto counsell is wise, Pro. 12.15.*

3

Thirdly, in that they hate sauing knowledge, and will not chuse the feare of the Lord. *A foole hath no delight in vnderstanding, Pro. 18.2.*

4

Fourthly and lastly, in that they cast the Word of God behind them, and tread it vnderneath their feet. *Loe, they haue reiected the Word of the Lord, and what wisdom is in them! Ier. 8.9. therefore come out from*

from amongst thē, lest thou partake of their folly. They are pitch, if thou touch them, they will defile thee. There is a kind of poyson and venome in the words & the society of the wicked, which will fret, as the Apostle sayes, like a Gangrene; and mens soules are more ready to take the contagion of sin, than their bodies are to take the infection of the plague. It would take vp a long time, and proue a large discourse, to shew how many wayes, and by what degrees mischief doth grow, by haunting wicked company. By often hearing filthy and obscene speeches, zeale in many is quenched, and such

language growes in-offensive. By often seeing lewd pranks and wicked practices, men can looke on without dislike. Thus the societie of the wicked quells a mans hatred of their wicked courses, and so incharms him, that (if hee cast not in his lot amongst them yet) he hath no power to gaine-say or reprove them. Therefore as you loue your soules, loath the company of the wicked. Can a man take fire into his bosome, and not burne? liue amongst, or delight to be with the wicked, and not bee vngodly? Dost thou not know *that a little leauen will sowre the whole lump*? And as the old saying is, One scabbed sheepe

sheepe infects the whole flocke. Therefore say as *David*, *Away from mee yee wicked, I will keepe the Commandements of my God*, *Psal.* 119.115. If thou wouldest haue grace thrive in thee, Be a companion of those that feare God and keepe his precepts, *Psal.* 119.63. For euill men and deceiuers grow worse and worse, deceiuing, and being deceived. Now as these euils must be auoided, so (if you would grow in grace) good things must bee practised; as the meanes to procure health of body is first to purge out malignant humours, and then to take cordials, and to obserue a good diet.

Therefore, first of all

Q 3 goe

Psal. 119.
115.

2 *Tim.* 3.
13.

Good
things to
be fol-
lowed.

goe through-stitch with the worke of reformation, set not vpon it by halfs, to reforme, and amend in part, and leaue some corruptions vntoucht, vnreformed, is very dangerous. Many Christians after enlightning set onely vpon some grosse and capitall enormities, and those (it may be) they haue giuen a deadly wound, so as they shall neuer bee able againe to make head against their poore soules, but yet passe by the reformation of some smaller euils; which being let alone haue at length growne strong enough to beate them from their holy profession. *If there be not a cleansing of our selues from all filthinesse of*

*of flesh and spirit, we shall ne-
uer grow up vnto holinesse in
the feare of God, 2 Cor 7.1.*

If any sinne be fauoured and
and spared, though it may
sit downe, and be quiet for
a while, yet at last by the
helpe of the diuell, and our
owne vile hearts, it will
breake out, and so foile vs,
as we shall fowly blemish
our holy Profession, if not
wholly fall from it. Rest
not therefore in a partiall
reformation; Thou hast no
assurance that thy foot
standeth firme and sure in
grace, vntill all sinnes bee
hatefull vnto thee, and eue-
ry euill way more or lesse
reformed in thee. If thou
dost not thoroughly re-
forme, thou wilt hardly

Q 4 grow

grow in grace, yea hardly keepe from falling, whatsoeuer hopes thou mayest now giue vnto others of thy standing, and growing better.

Secondly, labour to keep thy heart soluble, bee euery day abased at the sight of thy finnes, and the sense of thy vilenesse and vnworthinesse. The way for a man to get any good at Gods hand, is to acknowledge and bewaile his emptinesse, to grieue and mourne for his vnworthinesse. God hath made a promise to fill the hungry with good things, *Apoc. 21.6. I will giue to him that is athirst, of the Well of the water of life freely, &c. 1 Pet. 5.5. Hee giveth*

Apo. 21.6.

giueth grace to the humble.

Humble your selnes therefore vnder the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you.

Thirdly, vse the societie of Gods people, by whose example you may be encouraged to godlinesse, and by whose meanes you may bee furthered in the way of happinesse. Fire-brands being laid together & blowne, will increase their heat and light; so doth communitie and societie with those where the Word of God is kept on foot, by holy and Christian conference, increase the light of knowledge and the loue of goodnesse in vs. As there is a secret poyson, and bane in

Q 5 the

the societie of the wicked to corrupt and infect; so there is a communicative, and a working power in the communion of Saints, both to continue; and to augment our stocke of grace. Little doe we know or conceiue how iniurious we are vnto our selues; how much wee hinder our growth in grace, by our shunning the societie of the Godly, by our too much strangenesse with good Christians. The gaine which many haue made of priuate conference, the good they haue gotten by godly meetings, hath caused them to out-strip their brethren in many graces, and to exceed them by many degrees in holy duties. Therefore

as

as Iuda and Israel did aske
the way to Zion, saying; Come,
and let vs cleave to the Lord
in a perpetuall couenant that
shall not be broken, Ier. 50. 5.
So let vs inquire after good
societie, and enter into a
solemne league with good
people, engaging our selues
one vnto another that so
we may mutually hold vp,
yea; and increase all good
gifts and graces in vs.

Fourthly, Be frequent in
hearing and reading of the
Word; the Word of God
is the *Word of grace*, which
is able to build vs up further,
Act. 20. 32. Therefore,
1 Pet. 2. 2. As new borne
babes, desire the sincere milke
of the Word, that you may
grow thereby. If this Word
be

Act. 20. 32

Col. 1. 6.

be thy delight, it will make thee fruitfull, *Psal. 1. 2, 3.* Hence it is, that in *Esay 55. 10, 11.* the Word is compared vnto raine, which watereth the earth, and makes it to bring forth, and bud, that it may giue seed, &c. The barrennesse of many soules proceeds from the want of the Word to make them fruitfull. *Paul* tels the *Colossians*, Chap. 1. 6. That they were fruitfull through the Gospell, from the day that they heard it, and truly knew the grace of God. The ministry of the Word is Gods holy ordinance, to beget and increase grace in his children, beating them off from the world, raising them vp to a higher pitch of
of

of heavenly-mindednesse,
teaching them which way
to preuent occasions of sin,
and to beat backe the ten-
tations of the deuill, &c.

Oh, pity then, pity those
poore soules, which want
these liuing waters, and this
bread of Life. How many
thousands in this our Eng-
lish Israel perish for want
of vision, the meanes of
grace? What will become
of all cruell soule-murthe-
rers in the day of the Lord?
Oh let vs continually bow
the knees of our hearts to
the Father of spirits, that
hee would put bowels of
compassion into those that
haue authoritie, that the
Church may be purged of
all vsfauoury salt, and a
supply

Prou. 9.3
4,5.

supply made of a faithfull Ministry; which might feelingly and tenderly respect the flocke of Christ, which hee hath purchased with his bloud: And let all such (as to whom Wisdome hath sent her maidens, calling them that are destitute of wisdome, to come and eat of her meat, and drinke of her wine) know that God looks for fruits of increase answerable to the meanes of grace bestowed vpon them, lest they be in the number of those which *receiue the grace of God in vaine*, 2 Cor. 6.1.

Fifthly, if thou desirest to increase thy stocke of grace, set thy grace on worke, let it not be idle. *The diligens*

diligent hand maketh rich, saith Salomon, Prou. 10. 4.

Pro. 10. 4.

And, in all labour there is abundance: Prou. 14. 13.

Pro. 14. 13

I dare boldly say it is in nothing more true, nay in nothing so true, as in the improvement of grace; use grace and haue, yea, increase grace. That seruant which used and improved his Masters *Talents*, gained by them, and increased them. Whereupon Christ inferred, *Mat. 25. 29. Vnto enery one that hath, it shall be giuen; and he shall haue abundance.* Instruments and vessels, for want of use, doe (oft-times) grow worse, and vnseruiceable. Gifts and graces of the Spirit, are bettered by improving them

Matth. 25.
29.

them; according to the common saying, Use makes perfect. Hence it is, that *1 Tim. 4. 15.* Paul aduiseeth him, *These things exercise, and giue thy selfe vnto them, that it may be seene how thou profitest.*

1 Cor. 3. 6

Sixthly, and last of all, bee earnest with the Lord in prayer, that hee would put a spirit of life and power into all those meanes vsed by thee, or bestowed vpon thee, for the increase of grace. For *Paul may plant, and Apollos may water, but God must giue the increase, 1 Cor. 3. 6.* without his blessing all meanes are but naked and empty. He is the Author and perfecter of euery good thing begunne
in

in any. Hence it is that the Apostle prayes for the *Philippians* 1. 9. that their love may abound more and more. And that the *Colossians* 1. 9. may bee fulfilled with knowledge, and verse 10. fruitfull in all good workes. Teaching vs, that prayer is the onely helpe to obtaine increase of any good from God. For although the Lord will perfect the worke of his owne hands, and make good whatsoever he hath promised vnto his children, yet will he haue them suiters vnto him for that good they desire to obtaine at his hands. As we looke for this honour at our childrens hands, that they shall aske of

of vs such things as they want, and we doe purpose to bestow vpon them; so much more standeth it with our duty, and is agreeable to Gods right and soueraigntie ouer vs, that we by prayer begge at his hands all good things which he hath purposed, and promised to bestow vpon vs. As doth notably appeare by those words, *Eze. 36. 36, 37. I the Lord haue spoken it, and will doe it. I will yet for this bee sought of the house of Israel to performe it vnto them.* If we aske not, we must not looke to receiue any thing from God as a blessing. By prayer wee obtaine those good things from God, vnto which we could neuer haue attained

attained vnto by art, industry, or any other helpe; as the fauorits of Kings get more by begging then any other can doe by any other facultie. Besides, as by our frequent conuersing with Gods children, wee doe not onely obserue their temper, and disposition; but by little and little learne their phrase and manner of speech; yea, and grow into some neerer acquaintāce with their gifts and graces, and haue our hearts and affections more firmly vnited, and knit vnto them: euen so; by our daily conuersing with God in prayer, wee grow better acquainted with the Lord, we come better to know the language of his spirit,
and

and so more to partake of the gifts and graces thereof, yea, we shall feele and finde increase both of our loue vnto God, and of his loue vnto vs.

Now because of the deceitfulnesse of our hearts, and the abundance of selfeloue, which abides in the best of Gods children, wee are too ready to flatter, and to thinke too well of our selues, taking oft-times mole-hils for mountaines; it will not bee amisse to make some priuie search, whether wee finde any growth of grace in vs, or whether it stand at a stay, or bee in declension. A shame it will be for all such as liue vnder the meanes,
vpon

vpon whom God doth daily bestow cost, watering them with heauenly dewes, if they thriue not. If grace bee true and not counterfeit, more or lesse, some way or other it will grow. For to say truth, it is onely the good heart that groweth and brings forth fruit: an euill heart may giue some appearance, make some shew of growth, but growes not; like to an *Atrophe*, one whose meat doth him no good, he eats and drinkes, and it may be, with a greedy appetite deuours more than is fitting, yet battels not, but rather falls away; euery day more meager and leane than other: This (as was touched before)

before) shewes there is no sound vnion betwixt Christ and such; that they are no true and liuely members of Christs body: for then there would appeare some fruitfulnessse, *Ioh. 15. 5. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit.* Well then, seeing the Lord hath planted vs amongst the riuers of waters, let vs take a view of our growth and fruitfulnessse.

Signes of
of our
growth in
grace.

First, thou mayest know thou growest in grace, if thou growest more and more into a dislike of sinne, (as was said in the beginning) if thy wants and weaknesses doe worke in thee daily, deeper humiliation.

For

For as grace discouers corruption, so the more it growes (as a light that comes into a darke roome) the more it shewes vs the filthinesse and odiousnesse thereof, and makes vs more and more ashamed of it.

Secondly, thou mayest know thou growest in grace, by thine appetite to Gods ordinances. Dost thou taste more and more sweetnesse in the Word? Is prayer more and more delightfull to thy soule? Dost thou receiue more and more comfort by the Sacrament? Doth thy soule more and more delight to be in the place where Gods honour dwelleth? And are the feet of those that bring glad tidings

dings of saluation more and more beautifull in thine eyes? Whence arise these fruits, but from that seed of grace sowne in thy soule? I tell thee for a truth, that if these fruits be in thee, and thy affections to the meanes of grace, be more and more intire and hearty, thou needest no more doubt of the growth of grace in thy soule, than thou wouldest, or dost question the growth of thy body, when thou findest thy stomacke vnto thy daily food fresh and quick, and the parts and members of thy body, euery day more actiue and liuely than other, and more strong and able vnto their seuerall offices. For certainly it is only
grace

grace which makes the ordinances of God alwayes sweet vnto vs. For to a gracelesse palat they are for the most part vnsauoury. What made *Dauid* so much to long after Gods Sanctuary? It was the grace of his heart, which set an edge vpon his affections, and made his soule (*euen as the Hart brayeth for the ri- uers of waters*) to thirst after God, *Psal. 42. 1.* When grace growes, our loue vnto the meanes increaseth, *2 Cor. 10. 15.* *We hope* (saith *Paul*) *when your faith shall increase, to bee magnified by you.*

Psal. 42. 1.

2 Cor. 10.
15.

Therefore consider whether thine appetite to Gods ordinances increaseth. Thou

R mayest

mayest know it by these notes.

Psal 36. 8

First of all, if thou findest thy soule maruellously refreshed with them, *Psal. 36. 8. They shall bee satisfied with the fatnesse of thy house, and thou shalt giue them drink out of the riuers of thy pleasure.*

Secondly, if Gods ordinances doe raise thee vp to an higher pitch of heauenly-mindednesse, and doe more and more beat off thine affections from the world, and marre thy taste of earthly things, through the abundance of sweetnesse which thou findest in holy duties.

Obiect.

But may not a gracelesse and wicked heart find sweetnesse

ness in Gods ordinances? *Ezekiel* had a pleasant voyce in the eares of the wicked, Chap. 33. 32. So *Herod* heard *Iohn Baptist* gladly. And the temporary belceuer, who resembleth the stony ground, *heareth the Word, and receiveth it with ioy, Mat. 13. 20.* And *Heb. 6. 4.* Some that fall away may taste of the heavenly gift. And *vers. 5.* taste of the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come. How then is the taste of the godly distinguished from taste of the wicked?

*Mat. 13.
20.*

Answ.

The taste of the wicked proceeds only from tasting of the ordinances of God, not feeding vpon them; whereas the taste of the

godly comes from feeding vpon them. Now you know there is a great difference betwixt a Cookes tasting of meats, who dips but his finger in them, or toucheth them but with the tip of his tongue; and his taste that eates of the meat, and takes it downe into his stomacke. A wicked man may taste of Gods Ordinances, but hee eates them not, hee feedes not vpon them, hee doth not digest them, they make no good bloud, no spirituall health or strength in him, he quickly vomits them vp againe, so as his soule thrives not by them; whereas the good heart receiues the Word and thrives by it, *For hee brings forth*

forth fruit with patience.

Fourthly, if there be that excellencie in Grace, this makes wonderfully for the comfort of all Gods children, in regard of many high fauours, and singular priuiledges which they haue a right vnto. First of all, this may comfort them in and against all those tentations, whatsoeuer doe or may befall them, either in respect of their kind and nature, or in respect of their strength and measure. Eue-ry one feeleth most where and how his shooe doth pinch him; and therefore in the agony of his soule cries out (I know it to be true.) Neuer poore soule tempted as I am tempted, and speaks

Vse 4.

1 Cor. 10.
13.

Heb. 5.7.

in the language of the Church, *Lam. 1. 12.* Behold and see, if any sorrow bee like to my sorrow: for thy comfort consider what *Paul* speaks to the Corinthians, as weak and as foully defiled as thou hast beene, *1 Cor. 10. 13* There hath no temptation taken you, but such as appertaineth to men; and God is faithfull, which will not suffer you to bee tempted above that you be able, but will euen give the issue with the temptation, that you may be able to beare it. Christ praying, that if it were possible the cup might passe from him, offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and teares vnto him that was able to saue him from death, and was also heard
in

in that which he feared. He^c was, and he was not heard; not heard, because not exempted from tasting of that bitter cup of his Passion: for therefore came he into the world, that hee might drinke thereof, as himselfe acknowledged: and yet heard, in that, strength and comfort was so abundantly ministred vnto him, that by suffering he overcame. And therefore, as one that had experience of our infirmities, hee hath taught vs to pray, *lead vs not into temptation, but deliuer vs from euill*: as if wee should say, howsoeuer (holy Father) thou hast determined to expose vs for our triall, vnto tentations, yet suffer vs not

R 4 to

to bee vanquished or overcome by any euill Now we know, or at the least should know, that (if wee pray in faith) God alwayes heares vs: if not to bee preserved from the tentation, yet to be vpheld and assisted with sufficiencie of grace to endure the tentation: so as either the power of it shall be weakned and abated, or else our strength to beare it so increased, that we shall by the helpe of his grace, be able to wade thorow and overcome it. For God knows our strength, and what our backes are able to beare, and therefore doth ballance and proportion the tentation to the strength of his children; weakelings or
young.

younglings hee will not o-
uer-load with such bur-
thens as may breake their
backes, or crush them to
pieces; they shall haue light
tentations. Whereas his
strong ones haue strong
trialls, yet no other than
such as they shall manfully
vndergoe, without fainting
vnder them, though not
without the feeling of the
smart of them. So that as
they haue iust cause to crie
out with *S. Paul*; *O wretched
man that I am, who shall de-
liuer me from the body of this
death?* So also in experi-
ence of Gods gracious as-
sistance, they haue no lesse
cause to breake forth into
thankfulnesse, and to tri-
umph with *Paul*, saying, *I*

R 5 thanke

thanke my God through Iesus Christ, &c. For is God the God of *Paul* only? Is his grace sufficiently onely for *Paul*, or some few other specially beloued, indowed with supereminēt graces? Is he not also our helpe, our strength, hee that yeelds sufficiencie of grace to euerie poore sinner, that trusteth in his goodnesse, and beleeueth in his promise? Surely yes; for the Lord is nigh vnto all that call vpon him, hee also will heare their cry and will helpe them, *Psal.* 145.18,19.

Secondly, this may wonderfully comfort vs against the outward crosse, as well as the inward temptation. The way to heauen
(we

(we know) is not strowed with rushes and violets, but beset with thorns; a rough, narrow and troublesome way, whereupon many of Gods children are disheartened, and are ready to faint vnder the crosse, when it lyes any thing heauie vpon them. If these had eyes to see, and hearts to consider of the excellency and sufficiency of grace, which makes vs willing to vndergoe whatsoeuer the Lord will lay vpon vs, well content with the Lords ordering and disposing of vs; they would reioyce in heauinesse, and bee comforted against the crosse. It may bee thou thinkest thy troubles are such, as thou shalt

I haue
made it
plaine in
my Cer-
diall for
the affli-
cted.

neuer be able to overcome, and therefore art ready euen to faint vnder them, & giue ouer in the plaine field. Oh but consider the excellencie of grace; wherewith the Lord hath hitherto supported thee in thy afflictions! Hath not God said, *I will not faile thee, nor forsake thee?* Heb. 13. 5. Hath he not said, *My grace shall be sufficient for thee?*

1 Pet. 1. 6.

What though thou beest plunged into a gulfe of sorrow through manifold afflictions which haue befallen thee? so that for a season thou art in heauinesse through them; yet through the power of grace thou shalt be able to hold vp thy head from sinking, yea to reioyce

reioyce in the end with ioy
vnspeakable and glorious,
1 *Pet.* 1. 8. What though
the deuill swell and rage a-
gainst thee? What though
his wicked instruments doe
combine and bandie them-
selues against thee, seeking
to spoile thee of all outward
and inward comfort? What
though thy neereſt and
deareſt friends doe now
turne away their faces from
thee, yea, hate and abhorre
thee as an out-caſt and ali-
en? Let *Dauids* comfort be
thine, who being in great
ſorrow becauſe of the rage
of the people which inten-
ded to ſtone him, comfor-
ted himſelfe in the Lord his
God, 1 *Sam.* 30. 6. So doe
thou comfort thy ſelfe in
the

the grace of God. Hath he bestowed his loue vpon thee? Hath he giuen thee of his grace? Though thy outward calamities bee neuer so many, neuer so great, though thine enemies bee neuer so mightie, neuer so powerfull, yet *stronger is he that is in thee, than he that is in the world*, 1 Ioh. 4. 4. If God grace thee, what though all the world should cast the dung of reproch in thy face to disgrace thee? If he loue thee, his loue is better than life, and he will keepe thee from taking infection or hurt, from the rage and malice of all the world that hate thee.

Last of all, the consideration of that which hath

been

beene spoken concerning the excellencie of Grace, may comfort thee against the dregs and reliques of corruption, and the remnants of the old man yet abiding in thee, which, it may be, doe so perplex thy soule, and wound thy conscience, that thou groanest vnder this pressure, and cryest out with *Paul*, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliuer me from the bodie of this death?* Know, thy condition is no other, no worse than the best of Gods children, who so long as they liue in this earthly tabernacle, doe carry about them the remainder of sin, which will defile their best actions, oft blemish

Ro. 7. 24.

mish their profession, yea, grieve Gods holy Spirit, and make their heavenly Father offended with them; yet comfort thy selfe, and bee assured, that though corruption may vex and molest thee, it shall neuer subdue, nor vanquish thee, because of the grace of God abiding in thee: *For sinne shall not haue dominion ouer you: for ye are not vnder the Law, but vnder Grace, Rom. 6. 14.* It is a good signe there is life, where wounds do bleed and smart; the griefe of thy soule for sinne, argues the life of grace abiding in thee; for those that are dead in sinnes, feelee no smart, are not grieved with corruption.

Sinne

Sinne is not ponderous in the heart and conscience of gracelesse persons; because it is in its proper element and place, where it is welcomed and entertained, where it lives and raignes. Therefore if at any time thou feelest (as which of Gods children feele not) a rebellious law in thy members, rebelling against the law of thy minde, and carrying thee into the practice of such evils as thou hatest, and hast vowed against, let not this perplex thy soule, as if grace had forsaken thee, because it is no better with thee; but collect thy spirits, call vpon grace, and say, Where art thou, my friend, my guide,
my

Rom. 7. 23

my hope, my help? stand by me, & strengthen me against corruption, which is too strong for me; if thou helpe me not, I am vndone. I tell thee for truth, (for I know what I say) to be true) that by the vertue and strength of grace, a poore distressed soule, cleaving to the ground, abhorring its selfe, and lying at the very brinke of despaire, ready to bee swallowed vp of Death and Hell, consulting and resolving to try whether hell torments, or the hellish pangs of an afflicted conscience were more tolerable; I say, a poore soule in such a desperate condition, hath by the strength of grace beene brought backe
from

from death to life, and as it were from hell to heaven, received new, or revived againe its old comfort, beene at defiance with sinne and Satan, challenged Hell and Death, and bid them doe their worst, saying, *Who shall separate mee from the loue of God?* &c. Therefore yeeld not either to thine owne corruptions, or Satans tentations, though they haue got thee on the hip, and giuen thee the foile. Set speedily vpon the repairing of grace, and making vp those breaches which sinne hath made in thy soule and conscience. A good husband, as hee hath a care to keepe his house wind-tite and water-tite, so

Rom. 8. 38

so if through the violence of any storme or tempest, any thing be blowne downe or rent, he speedily sets vpon the repairing of it, lest, through negligence and delays, things grow worse and worse: euen so deales euery good man with his owne soule: if any thing be amisse, or out of order, he lets not all runne to ruine, but speedily sets vpon the repairing and amending of that which is any way weakened in him.

Let vs now grow towards a conclusion: *Is Grace the best thing, the chiefest good? &c.* Then let euery soule that shares in this benefit, beare his part in a song of praise, and
breake

breake forth in the Apostles words, *Thanks therefore beee vnto God for this unspeakable gift, 2 Cor. 9. 15.* It is vn-speakable both in respect of its owne worth, and our vnworthinesse. Our vnworthinesse doth greaten Gods grace bestowed vpon vs. To bestow grace vpon well deseruing people were but retribution: but to honour vile and base ones, as we by nature are, is such mercy as can not be sufficiently praised of vs. How should this knit our hearts vnto our God, and set our tongues on work with continuall thanks for his rich grace bestowed vpon our poore soules. It is obserued by some that *David* is moe frequent

frequent in his praises, than in his petitions. Hee doth often praise God when hee askes nothing of him: but seldome doth he begge that benefit, for which his soule is not raised vp to an anticipation of thanks. Hee makes way for new fauours, that doth thankfully acknowledge old. The Lord hath appointed thankfulness to be as a refluxe of his blessings, whereby they are sweetned vnto vs, as waters are kept sweet by motion, flowing too and fro. His grace, and mercies are daily and hourly renewed vnto vs: Why not then our thanks so to him? Offer we therefore continually vnto our gracious God

thid

this sweet smelling sacrifice
of praise, and let it be per-
fumed with our sighes and
groanes proceeding from the
sense of our vnworthinesse.
Let vs bow our selues be-
fore the Lord as *Mephibo-*
sheth did to *Dauid*, and say,
What is thy seruant that thou
shouldest looke vpon such a
dead dogge as I am? 2 *Sam.*
9.8. That the Lord should
cast an eye of pittie and
compassion vpon such out-
casts as we are; me-thinkes
it should make vs with
soule-rauisht affections, to
be euermore praising of his
great and glorious Name,
who hath made vs precious
in his sight, and honourable
bestowing his loue vpon vs,
Esa. 43.4. Let vs euermore
acknow

acknowledge his loue with thankfulness; and the rather, because the Lord takes himselfe to be both satisfied, and glorified by our thanks. *Hee that offereth praise shall glorifie me, Psal. 50.32.* Know that whatsoever God hath done, or intendeth to doe for man, or to man, hath no proper end, but his owne glory. *He made all things for himselfe, Pro. 16. 4. Bring my sonnes and daughters euery one whom I haue created for my glory, Esa. 43. 6,7.* It is true that God worketh many things to our glory; and that Christ in vs may be more glorious, but the proper end which God aymes at in all, is his owne glory

glory. Therefore whatsoever wee are, let vs be it in God, and through God, and for God. Wee are the Lords workmanship; the grace we haue, and the glory wee expect, came, and will come from his free love, and therefore must be to the praise of the *glory of his Grace*, Eph. 1.6. As all waters come from the sea, and thither againe returne, even so all our happinesse comming from this Ocean of Gods free grace, should by praising this rich grace be resolved againe into it. But in this wee are too like the graue, and barren, which receiue much, but returne little, or nothing. Our backwardnesse vnto this dutie;
S lyeth

Deut. 26.

lyeth couched vnder that
 seruice which the Lord by
 the hand of *Moses*, enioyned
 his people ISRAEL: Who
 when they were come into
 the land of *Canaan*, which
 the Lord would giue them
 as an inheritance to possesse,
 should take of the first of all
 the fruits of the earth, and
 bring it to the Priest, who
 should set it downe before
 the Altar, and then they
 should say, *A Syrian was
 my father, &c.* vers. 5. This
 was to minde the *Israelites*
 of Gods loue and bountie
 towards them, and of those
 thanks which he lookes for
 backe againe from them.

One would thinke that
 the loue-tokens of a friend,
 which we daily and houely
 look

looke vpon, should occasion vs thankfully to minde him from whom they came : but we are like to dull Asses, and therefore must be stirred vp to good duties, especially to this of thanks, as the *Israelits* wereby that Ceremony and seruice of offering their firstlings continually vnto the Lord.

There is no Seruant which (if he be not deuoid of humanitie) will not bee euermore magnifying and extolling the bountie and liberalitie of his Lord and Master ; yea the very earth which drinkes in the raine that comes vpon it, *bringeth forth herbes meete for him by whom it is dressed, Heb. 6. 7.* much more should wee

returne back vnto the Lord
this tribute of thanks,
which he lookes for at our
hands. They are not the
children of grace which de-
nie the Lord this quit-rent.
If the light of Gods grace
shining vpon others, should
cause vs to glorifie God for
them; how much more
should his rich grace be-
stowed vpon our selues
prouoke vs vnto thankful-
nesse? Not that we should
thinke it enough to put the
Lord off with a few words
of course, *Thanks be to God,*
&c. God lookes for the
workes of our hands, as
well as the breath of our
mouthes. Our thankfulnessse
must bee reall, as well as
verball; the Lord calls for a
well

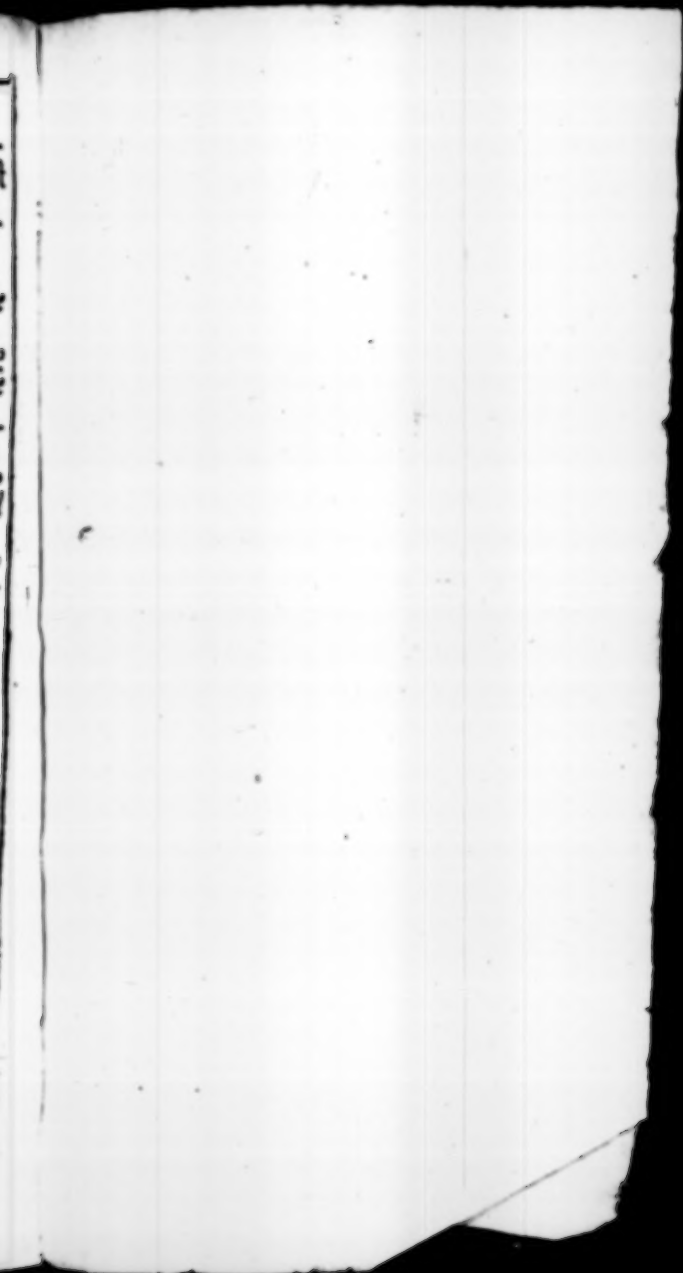
well ordered conuerſation
and a holy life, by way of
retribution, *Pſal. 50. 23.*
This will pleaſe God better
than the ſacrifice of rams,
or the caſues of our lippes.
They honour and pleaſe
God beſt, that obey him
moſt. If our hands doe not
praiſe God as well as our
tongues, our thanks are
but formalitie, the Lord
will not accept of them.
To honour God with our
mouthes, and diſhonour
him with our liues, is meere
hypocriſie. Let the grace of
God in our hearts appeare
not onely by *the grace of our*
lips, Pro. 22. but by the ho-
lineſſe of our liues, and then
ſhall wee truly honour him
who hath ſo highly honou-

red vs, as to bestow the best thing, the chiefeſt good, euen his rich grace vpon vs.

Iud. 14, 25

Now vnto him that is able to keepe you, that you fall not, and to preſent you faultleſſe before the preſence of his glory; that is, To God only wiſe, our Sauour, bee Glory, and Maieſtie, and Dominion, and Power, both now, and for euer, A M E N.

F I N I S.



A
TOUCHSTONE
OF GRACE.

Discovering the differences
betweene true and
counterfeit Grace:

Laying downe infallible E-
vidences and markes of
true Grace:

Seruing for the triall of a mans
spirituall estate.

By A. HARSNET,
Bachelor in Divinitie, and Minister of
Gods Word at *Chranham* in *Essex*.
The second Edition, corrected
and enlarged.

1 Pet. I. 10.

Wherefore, the rather, brethren, give dili-
gence to make your calling and elec-
tion sure: for if ye doe these things, ye
shall neuer fail.

L O N D O N,
Printed by R. B. for P. Stephens
C. Meredith, dwelling at the
Lyon in Pauls Church

1652.

when, or the meanes how
faith was wrought in them.
For, their education and
bringing vp was alwayes
godly and religious; from
their child-hood they haue
entertained the Word of
God; they haue alwayes
borne a good will to god-
linesse, and loued the pro-
fessours of the truth; al-
waies approued of the best
things, and therefore que-
stion the truth of faith and
grace in them. For the cō-
fort of such, let me first of
all tell them, that if all were
not well, twenty to one the
deuil would not be so busie
with them, to perplexe and
trouble them with these pi-
ous feares and holy doub-
tings. We seldome heare

or

or reade of any but the
Lords people, that have
these troubles, or that put
these doubts & questions.

But for the satisfying of
thy scruple; consider first
what Christ said to *Nico-*
demus, *Ioh. 3. 8.* *The wind*
bloweth where it listeth, &c.

Ioh. 3. 8.

The meaning of which
words, is to teach vs that
the operations of grace are
sometimes, as it were, hid
from the regenerate them-
selues, neither knowing
the time when they first
began to work, nor whēce
they sprung, nor to what
measure they will grow.
Therefore though thou
canst not tell by what
meanes, or at what time
the Spirit of God com-

H 4 meth

meth into thine heart, or how at first, its quickning and sanctifying presence gaue spirituall life vnto thy soule: yet blessed and happy is thy condition, if thou now findest faith to bee wrought in thee, which thou mayest be assured of, if thou findest thy soule enlightned with the sauing knowledge and vnderstanding of the truth, if thou hast beene abased and humbled vnder the hand of God, in the sight and sense of thy vnworthinesse, and if thou prizest Christ aboue all the world, labouring to winne him, and desiring to be found in him, *not hauing thine owne righteousnessse, but that which is through*

through the faith of Christ, even the righteousness which is of God through faith, Phil. 3. 9, 10. But if thou findest not these to be in thee, then thou mayest well question the truth of thy faith.

A second difference lies in the fruits and effects of faith: Where grace is, *faith workes by loue*, Gal. 5. 6. A heart knowing and beleeving what the Lord hath done for it, cannot but *loue much*, Luk. 7. 47: being so dearly beloued. And this loue of God workes the heart to a hatred of all things displeasing vnto God, Psal. 97. 10. and to a practice of that which he requireth, Psal. 26. 3. Thy
H 5 *louing*

2

Gal. 5. 6.

Psal. 97. 10

Psal. 26. 3

loving kindnesse is before
 mine eyes, therefore haue I
 walked in thy truth. Where-
 as the faith of the vnrege-
 nerate works no change in
 him, makes him no better
 than hee was, vnlesse it be
 in shew and appearance.
 Confidence of Gods loue
 emboldens him to wicked-
 nesse, and makes him to sin
 more and more, as *Ier. 3.*
4, 5. rather than abate sin
 in him. Certainly, if euer
 the Lord spake peace to
 thy soule through Christ,
 hee will so enflame thine
 heart with the loue of his
 truth, his Image, his ordi-
 nances, that these will so
 take vp thy heart, that thou
 shalt not turne againe vnto
 euill, *Psal. 85. 8.*

Psal. 85. 8

Thirdly

Thirdly and lastly, faith in the regenerate makes the heart to stoope to Christs Scepter, to *beare his voice and follow him*. It is faith which apprehends the authority and soueraignie which CHRIST hath ouer vs; and approues of the holines and goodnes of his Conmandements, and so inclines the heart vnto a willing and cheerefull obedience. Whereas the hypocrites faith doth embolden him vnto liqerty, it makes him loose and licentious, laying all vpon Christs back, saying, Christ dyed for vs, his blood shall cleanse vs, &c. Let the Ministers of Christ say what they can, threaten what

Ioh. 10. 37.

what they will, they are resolved to hold on, they will not shift one foot, nor stir *any* further than they list. Let iudgements bee threatned against them, threatned folke (they say) liue long ; they can laugh in their sleeves at the zeale of Gods seruants ; no more moued , or remoued with a Sermon , than with the wagging of a straw. Oh take heed therefore , that thou beest not deceiued in the truth of thy faith: Thou mayest haue a great deale of carnall confidence, and bold presumption, and yet not one dram of true sa- uing faith. *Take heed, bre- thren, lest at any time there be in any of you an euill heart,*
and

Heb. 3. 12.

and vnfaithfull, to depart away from the liuing God. Do not thinke that thy coming to Church, thy hearing of Christ preached, and receiuing of the Sacraments, are infallible euidences of true faith; for many thousands who take vp their Religion vpon trust, and take themselues to be sound belceuers, haue their hearts fraught with vnbeliefe, their faith being no better, nay scarce so good as the faith of deuils, for they tremble at the power and displeasure of the Lord, whereas these are not once touched, nor any thing affected therewith. And this shall suffice to haue spoken of faith, the
second

second Evidence of true Grace.

A third Evidence of Grace.

Subduing
of our
lusts.

1 Cor. 9. 27

Gal. 5. 17

NOW I come to the third Evidence of true Grace, and that is the subduing of our Lusts, and the conquering of our corruptions. This is meant by those words of *Paul*, *I beat downe my body, and bring it into subiection*. By body the Apostle doth meane the old man, sinne and corruption, which doth lust against the Spirit. All such as are truly regenerate by the quickning power of the Spirit, are sanctified (as was said before) in all the faculties

faculties of their soules,
and members of their bo-
dies : not only inlightned
in their iudgements to dis-
like that which is euill, but
their hearts and wills also
are set against it. They
know that all fleshly lusts
doe fight against their
soules, and therefore they
maintaine open warre with
them, and will not yeeld
any voluntary obedience
or subiection vnto them.
Grace cannot stand with
the regiment of sinne. For
as *Paul* saith, *Sinne shall not*
haue dominion ouer you, for
yee are not vnder the Law,
but vnder Grace. Howsoe-
uer the Lord (to checke
the securitie, presumption,
pride, selfe-conceitednesse,
and

Rom. 6.